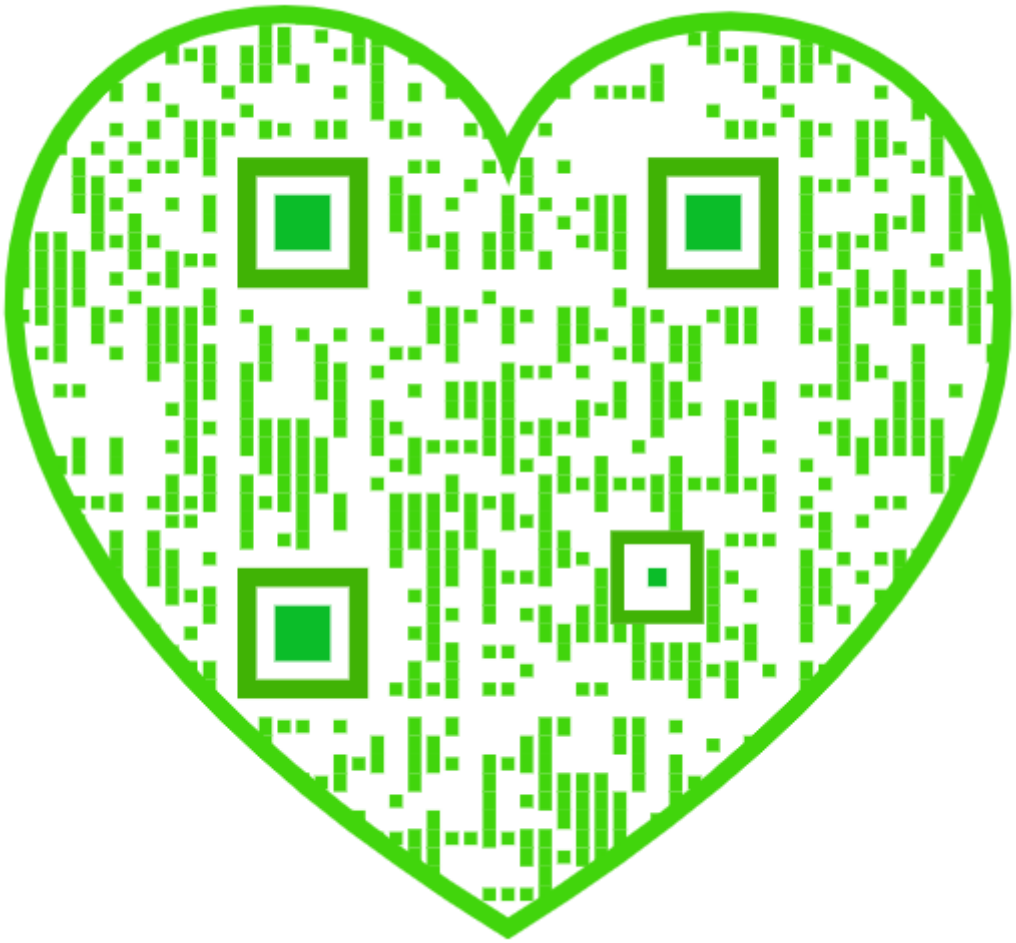

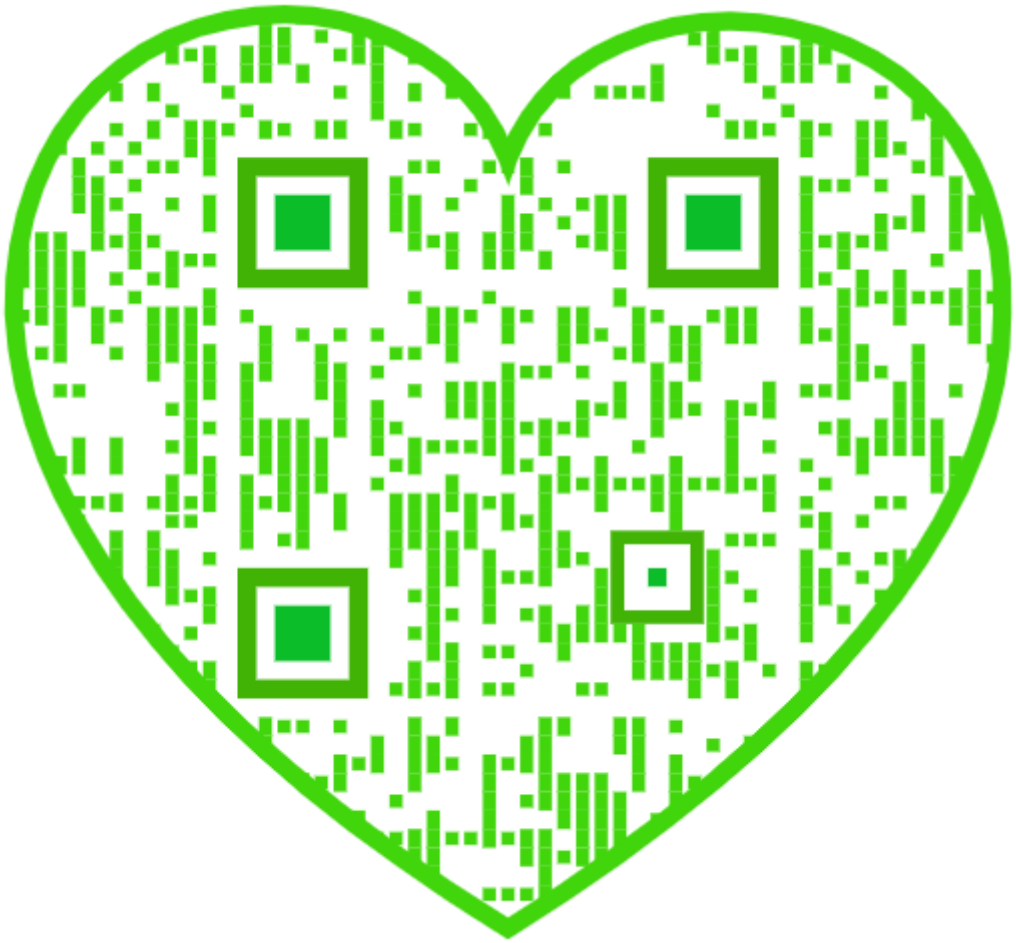

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J. Ruskin.

# THE TRUE

AND

# THE BEAUTIFUL

IN

## Nature, Art, Morals, and Religion,

SELECTED FROM THE WORKS OF

JOHN RUSKIN, A.M.,

AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS," "STONES OF VENICE," "POLITICAL ECONOMY OF ART," ETC., ETC.

WITH A NOTICE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

Mrs. L. C. TUTHILL,

AUTHOR OF "HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURE," "THE ARTIST," ETC.

THIRD EDITION.

NEW YORK:

JOHN WILEY.

1860.

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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1858, by

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# PREFACE.

A PREFACE need not, as a matter of course, be an apology. Yet, an apology would be offered for "Selections" from Ruskin's Works, were those valuable works accessible to readers in general. Being voluminous and expensive, they are beyond the means of many who could appreciate and highly enjoy them. Moreover, some of the topics discussed are merely local (English), and not specially interesting to the American public. A rich field, however, remains, from which these selections have been carefully culled, and methodically arranged to form a book complete in itself. For the choice and arrangement alone, is the Editor responsible; the Author speaks for himself.

L. C. T.

PRINCETON, N. J.

# NOTICE

OF

# JOHN RUSKIN AND HIS WORKS

---

Although novelty is generally a source of pleasure, yet what is *new* sometimes meets with opposition, merely because it is new.

About twenty years ago a book appeared in London, entitled, "Modern Painters: By a Graduate of Oxford;" the main object of which was, to vindicate the reputation of the landscape-painter Turner, whose pictures had been ruthlessly assailed by the Reviewers.

The author confesses that the book originated "in *indignation* at the shallow and false criticism of the periodicals of the day on the works of the great living artist."

And who was the presumptuous "Graduate," who thus threw down the gauntlet, and defied the mighty host of Reviewers? A young man unknown to fame! A mere fledgeling from the University!

Yet in his book there was a bold originality, an uncompromising independence, quite startling to the lovers of the

old, beaten track—the devotees to precedent. The daring champion of Turner, not contented with asserting the painter's claims to universal admiration, announced, somewhat authoritatively, certain principles of Art, neither derived from Alison nor from the Royal Academy.

The "Graduate" says, "when *public* taste seems plunging deeper and deeper into degradation day by day, and when the press universally exerts such power as it possesses, to direct the feeling of the nation more completely to all that is theatrical, affected, and false in Art; while it vents its ribald buffooneries on the most exalted truth, and the highest ideal of landscape, that this or any other age has ever witnessed, it becomes the imperative duty of all who have any perception or knowledge of what is really great in Art, and any desire for its advancement in England, to come fearlessly forward, regardless of such individual interests as are likely to be injured by the knowledge of what is good and right, to declare and demonstrate, wherever they exist, the essence and the authority of the Beautiful and the True."

The "Graduate" fearlessly asserts that the old masters were not true to Nature, and claims to be capable of judging of these matters, for the very good reason, namely, that he has been devoted from his youth to the laborious study of practical art; and, moreover, that whatever he affirms of the old schools of landscape-painting has been "founded on a familiar acquaintance with every important work of Art, from Antwerp to Naples."

He, however, modestly apologizes for the imperfection of his first book, and keeps back a part of it from the public, for more mature reflection, and for careful revision.

The Reviewers, who had so severely handled the landscape painter, now pounced upon the painter's fiery advocate, who had challenged them to the encounter.

Undaunted by their fulminations, "the Graduate" comes out with a second edition of "Modern Painters."

"Convinced of the truth," says he, "and therefore assured of the ultimate prevalence and victory of the principles which I have advocated, and equally confident that the strength of the cause must give weight to the strokes of even the weakest of its defenders, I permitted myself to yield to a somewhat hasty and hot-headed desire of being, at whatever risk, in the thick of the fire, and begun the contest with a part, and that the weakest and least considerable part, of the forces at my disposal. And I now find the volume thus boldly laid before the public, in a position much resembling that of the Royal Sovereign at Trafalgar, receiving, unsupported, the broadsides of half the enemy's fleet, while unforeseen circumstances have hitherto prevented, and must yet for a time prevent, my heavier ships of the line from taking any part in the action. I watched the first moment of the struggle with some anxiety for the solitary vessel,—an anxiety which I have now ceased to feel,—for *the flag of truth* waves brightly through the smoke of the battle, and my antagonists, wholly intent on the destruction of the leading ship, have lost their position, and exposed themselves in defenceless disorder to the attack of the following columns."

The enthusiasm of a man of genius appears to the multitude like madness. The fervor of his imagination and the intensity of his emotions, do, indeed, prevent him at times from perceiving clearly, not only what is for his own interest, but, what he would more earnestly deprecate, for the interest of the cause which he zealously advocates. Thus was it with the

"Graduate," when, stung to the quick like Byron, like him he retorted upon the "Scotch Reviewer."

"Writers like the present critic of Blackwood's Magazine deserve the respect due to honest, hopeless, helpless imbecility. There is something exalted in the innocence of their feeble-mindedness; one cannot suspect them of partiality, for it implies feeling; nor of prejudice, for it implies some previous acquaintance with their subject. I do not know that even in this age of charlatanry, I could point to a more barefaced instance of imposture on the simplicity of the public, than the insertion of these pieces of criticism in a respectable periodical. We are not insulted with opinions on music from persons ignorant of its notes; nor with treatises on philology by persons unacquainted with the alphabet; but here is page after page of criticism, which one may read from end to end, looking for something which the author knows, and finding nothing. Not his own language, for he has to look in his dictionary, by his own confession, for a word (chrysoprase) occurring in one of the most important chapters of the Bible; not the commonest traditions of the schools, for he does not know why Poussin was called 'learned;' not the most simple canons of art, for he prefers Lee to Gainsborough; not the most ordinary facts of Nature, for we find him puzzled by the epithet 'silver,' as applied to the orange-blossom—evidently never having seen anything *silvery* about an orange in his life, except a spoon.

"Nay he leaves us not to conjecture his calibre from internal evidence; he candidly tells us, that he has been studying trees *only for the last week*, and bases his critical remarks chiefly on his practical experience of birch.

"What is Christopher North about? Does he receive his critiques from Eton or Harrow,—based on the experience of a week's bird's-nesting and its consequences? How low must Art and its interests sink, when the public mind is inadequate

to the detection of this effrontery of incapacity. In all kindness to Maga, we warn her, that though the nature of this work precludes us from devoting space to the exposure, there may come a time when the public shall be themselves able to distinguish ribaldry from reasoning, and may require some better and higher qualifications in their critics of art, than the experience of a school-boy, and the capacities of a buffoon."

"Moderation," though subsequently highly commended by our author, is not the governing characteristic of poets or of painters, especially when their "eyes are in a fine frenzy rolling" with either inspiration or anger.

The second volume of "Modern Painters" was not issued till the first had passed through several editions. The author still chooses to appear only as the "Graduate of Oxford."

The main topic of this second volume is the nature of Beauty, and its influence on the human mind.

Again, the novelty and boldness of the writer's views startled and irritated the ice-bound advocates of precedent. Though no longer treated by the Reviewers with unmitigated contempt, he was still subjected to the lash of criticism.

The banner, with the defiant inscription, *Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur*, was again "hung out" at Edinburgh, but the "Graduate" probably quailed as little before it as Birnam Wood quailed before the banners of Dunsinane. However, this second volume could not fail to elicit warm and earnest admiration. The North British Review pronounced it "a very extraordinary and delightful book, full of truth and goodness, of power and beauty," and "what is more and better than all,—everywhere, throughout this work, we trace evidences of a deep reverence and a godly fear,—a per-

petual though subdued acknowledgment of the Almighty, as the sum and substance, the beginning and the ending of all truth, of all power, of all goodness, and of all beauty."

Even the Edinburgh Review was compelled to acknowledge "Modern Painters" as "one of the most remarkable works on art which has appeared in our time."

Discarding the incognito, the "Graduate" next appears before the public in a work entitled "The Seven Lamps of Architecture, by John Ruskin, Author of Modern Painters." The fanciful title and the reputation already acquired by the author of Modern Painters, at once drew attention to this learned and philosophical treatise on Architecture. It was discovered that the works of Mr. Ruskin "*must* be read;" they must be discussed; they must be "weighed and considered." He had gained a standing-place, and possessed power enough to move, if not the world, at least a portion of its wisest and best.

Three other eloquent and beautiful volumes on Architecture, entitled, "The Stones of Venice," were issued from time to time, while the promised volumes to complete "Modern Painters" were still delayed. This delay was chiefly owing to the necessity under which the writer felt himself, of obtaining as many memoranda as possible of mediæval buildings in Italy and Normandy, *now in process of destruction*, before that destruction should be consummated by the restorer or revolutionist. His "whole time," he says, "had been lately occupied in taking drawings from one side of buildings, of which masons were knocking down the other." These memoranda, obtained in every case from personal observation, had been collected at various times during seven-

teen years. Not satisfied, however, with these occasional visits to the sea-girt city Mr. Ruskin went again to Venice, in 1849, to examine not only every one of the older palaces, *stone by stone*, but every fragment throughout the city, which afforded any clue to the formation of its styles."

He says: "My taking the pains so to examine what I had to describe, was a subject of grave surprise to my Italian friends."

"Three years' close and incessant labor to the examination of the chronology of the architecture of Venice; two long winters being wholly spent in the drawing of details on the spot; and yet I see constantly that architects who pass three or four days in a gondola, going up and down the grand canal, think that their first impressions are as likely to be true as my patiently wrought conclusions."

From these careful studies and measurements, drawings were made by Mr. Ruskin to illustrate "The Stones of Venice," and afterwards engraved in England by the best artists. Besides the fine illustrations which adorn those beautiful volumes, Mr. Ruskin prepared a separate work, consisting entirely of engravings from drawings which could not be reduced to the size of an octavo volume, without loss of accuracy in detail. These magnificent engravings were published in London, by subscription, in twelve parts, folio imperial size, at the price of one guinea each. They were fac-similes of Mr. Ruskin's drawings, and beautifully colored.* The "Seven Lamps of Architecture" and "The Stones of Venice"

* All Mr. Ruskin's works, with the exception of two volumes of "The Stones of Venice," and these large illustrations, have been published in this country by Wiley & Halsted, Broadway, New York.

would alone have placed Mr. Ruskin among the very first writers on Art that England has ever nurtured.

The subtle critic of Art then turned aside, by way of episode, and wrote a *feuilleton* "On the Construction of Sheepfolds." Graceful, picturesque, rustic sheepfolds? By no means. The versatile "Graduate of Oxford" must give his views on a subject which at that time was agitating the minds and employing the pens of some of the ablest thinkers in Great Britain, namely, "The Church;" its character, authority, teaching, government, and discipline. It was a "Tract for the Times," but in direct opposition to the Tracts of his venerable *alma mater.*

To this bold pamphlet was prefixed the following characteristic "advertisement:"—

"Many persons will probably find fault with me for publishing opinions which are not new: but I shall bear this blame contentedly, believing that opinions on this subject could hardly be just if they were not 1800 years old. Others will blame me for making proposals which are altogether new; to whom I would answer, that things in these days seem not so far right but that they may be mended. And others will simply call the opinions false and the proposals foolish—to whose good will, if they take it in hand to contradict me, I must leave what I have written,—having no purpose of being drawn, at present, into religious controversy. If, however, any should admit the truth, but regret the tone of what I have said, I can only pray them to consider how much less harm is done in the world by ungraceful boldness, than by untimely fear."

Whatever were the "opinions" thus promulgated, there can be no doubt that the author's motive was a sincere, earnest desire *to do good.*

Another pamphlet from the same prolific pen, entitled "Pre-Raphaelitism," caused great excitement among the artists, as well as the critics.

At the close of the first volume of Modern Painters, Mr. Ruskin gave the following advice to the young artists of England:—"They should go to nature in all singleness of heart, and walk with her laboriously and trustingly, having no other thought but how best to penetrate her meaning; rejecting nothing, selecting nothing, and scorning nothing.' This he quotes in the Preface to his Pre-Raphaelitism, and says,—

"Advice which, whether bad or good, involved infinite labor and humiliation in the following it; and was therefore, for the most part, rejected. It has, however, been carried out, to the very letter, by a group of men who, for their reward, have been assailed with the most scurrilous abuse which I ever recollect seeing issue from the public press. I have, therefore, thought it due to them (the Pre-Raphaelites) to contradict the directly false statements which have been made respecting their works; and to point out the kind of merit which, however deficient in some respects, those works possess beyond the possibility of dispute."

Mr. Ruskin here says no more than Schiller had said before him:—

> "With genius, Nature is bound in eternal alliance,—
> Whatever mind has vowed, piously Nature performs."

Then why was the hue and cry raised against his "Pre-Raphaelitism?" Sneers are not arguments. For the want of arguments was the Reviewer reduced to the following absurdity:—"If there were a 'Burchell' among painters, he would, in the author's presence, cry Fudge! Nonsense!"

This would-be astute critic, however, like many who had gone before him, cried "mad dog" in vain. Mr. Ruskin still lives.

The third volume of Modern Painters was issued ten years after the publication of the two first volumes. Those two volumes, as has already been mentioned, were written to check the attacks upon Turner. Little did the "Graduate" then foresee what a range his spirit would take, after its first venturous flight!

"The *check* was partially given, but too late; Turner was seized by painful illness soon after the second volume appeared; his works towards the close of the year 1845, showed a conclusive failure of power; and I saw that nothing remained for me to write, but his epitaph."

No one can fail to admire the generous, enthusiastic devotion of Mr. Ruskin to his favorite artist; but, as few of Turner's paintings have reached this country, his eloquent descriptions of them, and subtle criticisms, would not be generally interesting, and have therefore been omitted in the "Selections" from his Works.

Engravings, however, from many of Turner's pictures are well known among us, and highly prized by genuine lovers of the Beautiful. Among these engravings the Illustrations to Rogers's Italy have been universally admired.

In November, 1853, Mr. Ruskin delivered four Lectures in Edinburgh, on Architecture and Painting; which have since been published in a beautifully illustrated volume.

He thought himself happy, he says, in his first Lecture, to address the citizens of Edinburgh on the subject of Architec-

ture; and yet, with his usual boldness and disregard of consequences to himself personally, he launched forth into a complete tirade against the Greek Architecture of that beautiful city. No doubt Mr. Ruskin remembered with some asperity the castigations of the Edinburgh Reviewers, and knowing that he was now strong enough to chastise the chastisers, he laid it on without mercy. Yet he is too earnest and too honest a man to say one word that he does not firmly believe to be for the advancement of noble Art.

The Fourth Volume of "Modern Painters" is one of his ablest works. His versatile mind here grapples with Science as successfully as it has hitherto done with Art. Among the Alps and their glaciers, he would have been a fit companion for the learned Guyot.

In pursuit of his investigations he had stood "where the black thundercloud was literally dashing itself in his face, while the blue hills seen through its rents were thirty miles away."

Indefatigable in the pursuit of that branch of Art, which "in all his lovings is *the* love," Mr. Ruskin has lately written a book for young persons, entitled, "The Elements of Drawing, in three Letters to Beginners." He always writes *con amore*, but never more so than in this valuable little treatise. Mr. Ruskin is not only a practical artist, but he has also had much experience in teaching, being employed at present as head-teacher of a class in Drawing, in the Working Men's College, 45 Great Ormond Street, London.

"The Political Economy of Art," the last published work by Mr. Ruskin, is the substance (with additions) of two Lectures delivered at Manchester, July 10th and 13th, 1857.

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The great "Art Treasures Exhibition," at Manchester, had brought together a splendid collection of pictures from the galleries, public and private, of the British kingdom, and it was a fine opportunity for Mr. Ruskin to address the lovers of art in behalf of artists and working-men. He did so, with wisdom, justice, and deep feeling; it is to be hoped that the influence of those lectures will not be confined to his own country.

As a Christian Philosopher, Mr. Ruskin deservedly ranks with the "judicious" Hooker, the eloquent Jeremy Taylor, and the "divine" Herbert. A devout spirit animates and inspires all his works. In the lowly cottage and the lofty cathedral, in the smiling valley and in the sublime mountain-top, he has an ever-realizing sense of the presence of God; and acknowledges that divine presence, not with light words, but with words of solemn import;—not as the God of Nature alone, but as the Almighty Father and Friend revealed in the life-giving gospel of Jesus Christ.

The most striking characteristic of Mr. Ruskin, next to his deep religious sentiments, is his intense love of Nature:—

"Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends;
Where rolled the ocean, thereon was his home;
Where a blue sky and glowing clime extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spoke
A mutual language, clearer than the tome
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
For Nature's pages, glassed by sunbeams on the lake."

Mr. Ruskin furnishes his readers with a lens through which all natural objects are glorified; the sky assumes new beauty —the clouds are decked with wondrous magnificence,—and even each individual tree excites curiosity and intense admiration. As he exults over them, we are ready to exclaim, with one of our own eloquent writers,—"What a thought that was, when God thought of a tree!"

It is a rare and delightful privilege to know exactly how the love of the Beautiful in Nature has been developed in any one human being; more especially in a many-sided being, such as John Ruskin. He has himself given us this privilege, for which we owe him many thanks, in the following charming morsel of philosophical autobiography:

"I cannot, from observation, form any decided opinion as to the extent in which this strange delight in nature influences the hearts of young persons in general; and, in stating what has passed in my own mind, I do not mean to draw any positive conclusion as to the nature of the feeling in other children; but the inquiry is clearly one in which personal experience is the only safe ground to go upon, though a narrow one; and I will make no excuse for talking about myself with reference to this subject, because, though there is much egotism in the world, it is often the last thing a man thinks of doing,—and, though there is much work to be done in the world, it is often the best thing a man can do,—to tell the exact truth about the movements of his own mind; and there is this farther reason, that, whatever other faculties I may or may not possess, this gift of taking pleasure in landscape I assuredly possess in a greater degree than most men; it having been the ruling passion of my life, and the reason for the choice of its field of labor.

"The first thing which I remember as an event in life, was being taken by my nurse to the brow of Friar's Crag on Derwentwater; the intense joy, mingled with awe, that I had in looking through the hollows in the mossy roots, over the crag, into the dark lake, has associated itself more or less with all twining roots of trees ever since. Two other things I remember, as, in a sort, beginnings of life;—crossing Shapfells (being let out of the chaise to run up the hills), and going through Glenfarg, near Kinross, in a winter's morning, when the rocks were hung with icicles; these being culminating points in an early life of more travelling than is usually indulged to a child. In such journeyings, whenever they brought me near hills, and in all mountain ground and scenery, I had a pleasure, as early as I can remember, and continuing till I was eighteen or twenty, infinitely greater than any which has been since possible to me in anything; comparable for intensity only to the joy of a lover in being near a noble and kind mistress, but no more explicable or definable than that feeling of love itself. Only thus much I can remember, respecting it, which is important to our present subject.

"First: it was never independent of associated thought. Almost as soon as I could see or hear, I had got reading enough to give me associations with all kinds of scenery; and mountains, in particular, were always partly confused with those of my favorite book, Scott's Monastery; so that Glenfarg and all other glens were more or less enchanted to me, filled with forms of hesitating creed about Christie of the Clint Hill, and the monk Eustace; and with a general presence of White Lady everywhere. I also generally knew, or was told by my father and mother, such simple facts of history as were necessary to give more definite and justifiable association to other scenes which chiefly interested me, such as the ruins of Lochleven and Kenilworth; and thus my pleasure in mountains or ruins was never, even in earliest childhood, free from a certain awe and melancholy, and general sense of the mean-

ing of death, though in its principal influence entirely exhilarating and gladdening.

"Secondly: it was partly dependent on contrast with a very simple and unamused mode of general life; I was born in London, and accustomed, for two or three years, to no other prospect than that of the brick walls over the way; had no brothers, nor sisters, nor companions; and though I could always make myself happy in a quiet way, the beauty of the mountains had an additional charm of change and adventure which a country-bred child would not have felt.

"Thirdly: there was no definite religious feeling mingled with it. I partly believed in ghosts and fairies; but supposed that angels belonged entirely to the Mosaic dispensation, and cannot remember any single thought or feeling connected with them. I believed that God was in heaven, and could hear me and see me; but this gave me neither pleasure nor pain, and I seldom thought of it at all. I never thought of nature as God's work, but as a separate fact or existence.

"Fourthly: it was entirely unaccompanied by powers of reflection or invention. Every fancy that I had about nature was put into my head by some book; and I never reflected about anything till I grew older; and then, the more I reflected, the less nature was precious to me: I could then make myself happy, by thinking, in the dark, or in the dullest scenery; and the beautiful scenery became less essential to my pleasure.

"Fifthly: it was, according to its strength, inconsistent with every evil feeling, with spite, anger, covetousness, discontent, and every other hateful passion; but would associate itself deeply with every just and noble sorrow, joy, or affection. It had not, however, always the power to repress what was inconsistent with it; and, though only after stout contention, might at last be crushed by what it had partly repressed. And as it only acted by setting one impulse against another, though it had much power in moulding the character, it had hardly any

in strengthening it; it formed temperament, but never instilled principle; it kept me generally good-humored and kindly, but could not teach me perseverance or self-denial: what firmness or principle I had was quite independent of it; and it came itself nearly as often in the form of a temptation as of a safeguard, leading me to ramble over hills when I should have been learning lessons, and lose days in reveries which I might have spent in doing kindnesses.

"Lastly: although there was no definite religious sentiment mingled with it, there was a continual perception of Sanctity in the whole of nature, from the slightest thing to the vastest; —an instinctive awe, mixed with delight; an indefinable thrill, such as we sometimes imagine to indicate the presence of a disembodied spirit. I could only feel this perfectly when I was alone; and then it would often make me shiver from head to foot with the joy and fear of it, when after being some time away from the hills, I first got to the shore of a mountain river, where the brown water circled among the pebbles, or when I saw the first swell of distant land against the sunset, or the first low broken wall, covered with mountain moss. I cannot in the least *describe* the feeling: but I do not think this is my fault, nor that of the English language, for, I am afraid, no feeling *is* describable. If we had to explain even the sense of bodily hunger to a person who had never felt it, we should be hard put to it for words; and this joy in nature seemed to me to come of a sort of heart-hunger, satisfied with the presence of a Great and Holy Spirit. These feelings remained in their full intensity till I was eighteen or twenty, and then, as the reflective and practical power increased, and the 'cares of this world' gained upon me, faded gradually away, in the manner described by Wordsworth in his Intimations of Immortality."

Happily for the world, these emotions, or "feelings," became enthroned in the Intellect of Ruskin.

"He who feels Beauty, but cannot intellectually recognise it, is ever dependent for this most joyous of emotions upon the vernal freshness of his senses; and as these grow dull, as youth flits past, the *emotion* of the beautiful gradually becomes a thing unknown. It is only through feeling that æsthetic emotion can touch such an one; and how soon, alas! does this medium between man and nature, between the soul and external things grow sluggish and torpid! But *with him who has learned to know as well as to feel—whose soul is one clear sky of intelligence*,—the case is far otherwise. Intellect brightens as the senses grow dull; and though the sensuous imagination pass into the yellow leaf as the autumn of life draws on, still will the Beautiful, having secured for itself a retreat in the intellect, naturally pass into immortality along with it. An old man, with closed eyes and flowing hair, would again, as in the days of ancient Greece, form the ideal of a poet; and the *taste of the age of Pericles*, enlightened by modern philosophy, and purified by Christianity, *might again return*."

A higher aim even than this will, we trust, be attempted in our own country. True; Art is here yet in its infancy. Its healthful, vigorous growth and development, will depend mainly upon the general cultivation of a correct Taste. We cannot expect our Artists to pursue high and noble aims until the standard of Taste is proportionably elevated.

For *the study of nature*,—the inseparable ally of Art,—no finer field can be found on the wide earth, than our own wide country;—and no better guide and interpreter, than JOHN RUSKIN.

L. C. T.

# Part 1.

# BEAUTY.

Scatter diligently in susceptible minds
The germs of the good and the beautiful!
They will develope there to trees, bud, bloom,
And bear the golden fruits of Paradise.

# Part 1.

## BEAUTY.

Any material object which can give us pleasure in the simple contemplation of its outward qualities, without any direct and definite exertion of the intellect, I call in some way, or in some degree, beautiful. Why we receive pleasure from some forms and colors, and not from others, is no more to be asked or answered than why we like sugar and dislike wormwood. The utmost subtilty of investigation will only lead us to ultimate instincts and principles of human nature, for which no further reason can be given than the simple will of the Deity that we should be so created. We may, indeed, perceive, as far as we are acquainted with His nature, that we have been so constructed as, when in a healthy and cultivated state of mind, to derive pleasure from whatever things are illustrative of that nature; but we do not receive pleasure from them *because* they are illustrative of it, nor from any perception that they are illustrative of it, but instinctively and necessarily, as we derive sensual pleasure from the scent of a rose. On these primary principles of our nature, education and accident operate to an unlimited extent; they may be cultivated or checked, directed or diverted, gifted by right guidance with the most acute and faultless sense, or subjected by neglect to every phase of error and disease. He who has followed up these natural laws of aversion and desire, rendering them more and more authoritative by constant obedience, so as to derive pleasure always from that which God originally intended should give him pleasure,

and who derives the greatest possible sum of pleasure from any given object, is a man of *taste.*

This, then, is the real meaning of this disputed word. Perfect *taste* is the faculty of receiving the greatest possible pleasure from those material sources which are attractive to our moral nature in its purity and perfection. He who receives little pleasure from these sources, wants taste; he who receives pleasure from any other sources, has false or bad taste.

And it is thus that the term "taste" is to be distinguished from that of "judgment," with which it is constantly confounded. Judgment is a general term, expressing definite action of the intellect, and applicable to every kind of subject which can be submitted to it. There may be judgment of congruity, judgment of truth, judgment of justice, and judgment of difficulty and excellence. But all these exertions of intellect are totally distinct from taste, properly so called, which is the instinctive and instant preferring of one material object to another without any obvious reason, that it is proper to human nature in its perfection so to do.

Observe, however, I do not mean by excluding direct exertion of the intellect from ideas of beauty, that beauty has no effect upon nor connexion with the intellect. All our moral feelings are so inwoven with our intellectual powers, that we cannot affect the one without, in some degree, addressing the other; and in all high ideas of beauty it is more than probable that much of the pleasure depends on delicate and untraceable perceptions of fitness, propriety, and relation, which are purely intellectual, and through which we arrive at our noblest ideas of what is commonly and rightly called "intellectual beauty." But there is yet no immediate exertion of the intellect; that is to say, if a person, receiving even the noblest ideas of simple beauty, be asked *why* he likes the object exciting them, he will not be able to give any distinct reason, nor

to trace in his mind any formal thought to which he can appeal as a source of pleasure. He will say that the thing gratifies, fills, hallows, exalts his mind, but he will not be able to say why, or how. If he can, and if he can show that he perceives in the object any expression of distinct thought, he has received more than an idea of beauty—it is an idea of relation.

By the term *ideas of relation*, I mean to express all those sources of pleasure which involve and require, at the instant of their perception, active exertion of the intellectual powers.

The sensation of Beauty is not sensual on the one hand, nor is it intellectual on the other, but is dependent on a pure, right, and open state of the heart, both for its truth and its intensity, insomuch that even the right after-action of the intellect upon facts of beauty so apprehended, is dependent on the acuteness of the heart-feeling about them; and thus the apostolic words come true, in this minor respect as in all others, that men are alienated from the life of God, "through the ignorance that is in them, having the understanding darkened, because of the hardness of their hearts, and so being past feeling, give themselves up to lasciviousness;" for we do indeed see constantly that men having naturally acute perceptions of the beautiful, yet not receiving it with a pure heart, nor into their hearts at all, never comprehend it, nor receive good from it, but make it a mere minister to their desires, and accompaniment and seasoning of lower sensual pleasures, until all their emotions take the same earthly stamp, and the sense of beauty sinks into the servant of lust.

Nor is what the world commonly understands by the *cultivation of taste*, anything more or better than this, at least in times of corrupt and over-pampered civilization, when men build palaces, and plant groves, and gather luxuries, that they

and their devices may hang in the corners of the world like fine-spun cobwebs, with greedy, puffed up, spider-like lusts in the middle. And this, which in Christian times is the abuse and corruption of the sense of beauty, was in that Pagan life of which St. Paul speaks little less than the essence of it, and the best they had; for I know not that of the expressions of affection towards external Nature to be found among Heathen writers, there are any of which the balance and leading thought cleaves not towards the sensual parts of her. Her beneficence they sought, and her power they shunned; her teaching through both they understood never. The pleasant influences of soft winds, and singing streamlets, and shady coverts, of the violet couch and plane-tree shade, they received, perhaps, in a more noble way than we, but they found not anything except fear, upon the bare mountain or in the ghastly glen. The Hybla heather they loved more for its sweet hives than its purple hues. But the Christian theoria seeks not, though it accepts, and touches with its own purity, what the Epicurean sought, but finds its food and the objects of its love everywhere, in what is harsh and fearful, as well as what is kind, nay even in all that seems coarse and common-place; seizing that which is good, and delighting more sometimes at finding its table spread in strange places, and in the presence of its enemies, and its honey coming out of the rock, than if all were harmonized into a less wondrous pleasure; hating only what is self-sighted and insolent of men's work, despising all that is not of God; yet able to find evidence of Him still, where all seems forgetful of Him, and to turn that into a witness of His working which was meant to obscure it, and so with clear and unoffending sight beholding Him for ever, according to the written promise,—"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Ideas of Beauty are among the noblest which can be pre

sented to the human mind, invariably exalting and purifying it according to their degree; and it would appear that we are intended by the Deity to be constantly under their influence, because there is not one single object in nature which is not capable of conveying them, and which, to the rightly perceiving mind, does not present an incalculably greater number of beautiful, than of deformed parts; there being in fact scarcely anything, in pure, undiseased Nature, like positive deformity, but only degrees of beauty, or such slight and rare points of permitted contrast as may render all around them more valuable by their opposition; spots of blackness in creation, to make its colors felt. But although everything in Nature is more or less beautiful, every species of object has its own kind and degree of beauty; some being in their own nature more beautiful than others, and few, if any individuals, possessing the utmost beauty of which the species is capable. This utmost degree of specific beauty, necessarily co-existent with the utmost perfection of the object in other respects, is the *ideal* of the object.

We must be modest and cautious in the pronouncing of positive opinions on the subject of beauty; for every one of us has peculiar sources of enjoyment necessarily opened to him in certain scenes and things, sources which are sealed to others; and we must be wary, on the one hand, of confounding these in ourselves with ultimate conclusions of taste, and so forcing them upon all as authoritative; and on the other, of supposing that the enjoyments, which we cannot share, are shallow or unwarrantable, because incommunicable. By the term Beauty, two things are signified; First, that external quality of bodies which may be shown to be in some sort typical of the Divine attributes, and which, therefore, I shall for distinction's sake call *typical* beauty; and second, the

appearance of felicitous fulfilment of functions in many things, and this I shall call *vital* beauty.

Let us briefly distinguish those qualities, or types, on whose combination is dependent the power of mere *material loveliness*. I pretend neither to enumerate nor to perceive them all; yet certain powerful and palpable modes there are, by observing which, we may come at such general conclusions on the subject as may be practically useful.

1. Infinity, or the type of Divine Incomprehensibility.
2. Unity, or the type of the Divine Comprehensiveness.
3. Repose, or the type of the Divine Permanence.
4. Symmetry, or the type of the Divine Justice.
5. Purity, or the type of Divine Energy.
6. Moderation, or the type of Government by Law.

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### I.—INFINITY.

Heaven lies about us in our infancy,—
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy.
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy.
The youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended.
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

One, however, of these child instincts, I believe that few forget; the emotion, namely, caused by all open ground, or lines of any spacious kind against the sky, behind which there might be conceived the sea.

Whatever beauty there may result from effects of light on foreground objects, from the dew of the grass, the flash of the cascade, the glitter of the birch trunk, or the fair daylight hues of darker things (and joyfulness there is in all of them), there is yet a light which the eye invariably seeks with a deeper feeling of the beautiful, the light of the declining or breaking day, and the flakes of scarlet cloud burning like watch-fires in the green sky of the horizon; a deeper feeling, I say, not perhaps more acute, but having more of spiritual hope and longing, less of animal and present life, more manifest, invariably, in those of more serious and determined mind (I use the word serious, not as being opposed to cheerful, but to trivial and volatile); but, I think, marked and unfailing even in those of the least thoughtful dispositions. I am willing to let it rest on the determination of every reader, whether the pleasure which he has received from these effects of calm and luminous distance be not the most singular and memorable of which he has been conscious; whether all that is dazzling in color, perfect in form, gladdening in expression, be not of evanescent and shallow appealing, when compared with the still small voice of the level twilight behind purple hills, or the scarlet arch of dawn over the dark, troublous-edged sea.

Let us try to discover that which effects of this kind possess or suggest, peculiar to themselves, and which other effects of light and color possess not. There *must* be something in them of a peculiar character, and that, whatever it be, must be one of the primal and most earnest motives of beauty to human sensation.

Do they show finer characters of form than can be developed by the broader daylight? Not so; for their power is almost independent of the forms they assume or display; it matters little whether the bright clouds be simple or manifold, whether the mountain line be subdued or majestic; the fairer forms of

earthly things are by them subdued and disguised, the round and muscular growth of the forest trunks is sunk into skeleton lines of quiet shade, the purple clefts of the hill-side are labyrinthed in the darkness, the orbed spring and whirling wave of the torrent have given place to a white, ghastly, interrupted gleaming. Have they more perfection or fulness of color? Not so; for their effect is oftentimes deeper when their hues are dim, than when they are blazoned with crimson and pale gold; and assuredly in the blue of the rainy sky, in the many tints of morning flowers, in the sunlight on summer foliage and field, there are more sources of mere sensual color-pleasure than in the single streak of wan and dying light. It is not then by nobler form, it is not by positiveness of hue, it is not by intensity of light (for the sun itself at noonday is effectless upon the feelings), that this strange distant space possesses its attractive power. But there is one thing that it has, or suggests, which no other object of sight suggests in equal degree, and that is,—*Infinity*. It is of all visible things the least material, the least finite, the farthest withdrawn from the earth prison-house, the most typical of the nature of God, the most suggestive of the glory of his dwelling-place. For the sky of night, though we may know it boundless, is dark, it is a studded vault, a roof that seems to shut us in and down; but the bright distance has no limit—we feel its infinity, as we rejoice in its purity of light.

Let the reader bear constantly in mind, that I insist not on his accepting any interpretation of mine, but only on his dwelling so long on those objects, which he perceives to be beautiful, as to determine whether the qualities to which I trace their beauty be necessarily there or no. Farther expressions of infinity there are in the mystery of Nature, and in some measure in her vastness, but these are dependent on our own imperfections, and therefore, though they produce

sublimity they are unconnected with beauty. For that which we foolishly call vastness is, rightly considered, not more wonderful, not more impressive, than that which we insolently call littleness; and the infinity of God is not mysterious, it is only unfathomable; not concealed, but incomprehensible; it is a clear infinity, the darkness of the pure, unsearchable sea.

## II.—UNITY.

"All things," says Hooker, "(God only excepted) besides the nature which they have in themselves, receive externally some perfection from other things." The Divine essence I think it better to speak of as comprehensiveness, than as unity, because unity is often understood in the sense of oneness or singleness, instead of universality, whereas the only Unity which by any means can become grateful or an object of hope to men, and whose types therefore in material things can be beautiful, is that on which turned the last words and prayer of Christ before his crossing of the Kidron brook. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee."

And so there is not any matter, nor any spirit, nor any creature, but it is capable of a unity of some kind with other creatures, and in that unity is its perfection and theirs, and a pleasure also for the beholding of all other creatures that can behold. So the unity of spirits is partly in their sympathy, and partly in their giving and taking, and always in their love; and these are their delight and their strength, for their

strength is in their co-working and army fellowship, and their delight is in the giving and receiving of alternate and perpetual currents of good, their inseparable dependency on each other's being, and their essential and perfect depending on their Creator's: and so the unity of earthly creatures is their power and their peace, not like the dead and cold peace of undisturbed stones and solitary mountains, but the living peace of trust, and the living power of support, of hands that hold each other and are still: and so the unity of matter is, in its noblest form, the organization of it which builds it up into temples for the spirit, and in its lower form, the sweet and strange affinity, which gives to it the glory of its orderly elements, and the fair variety of change and assimilation that turns the dust into the crystal, and separates the waters that be above the firmament from the waters that be beneath; and in its lowest form, it is the working and walking and clinging together that gives their power to the winds, and its syllables and soundings to the air, and their weight to the waves, and their burning to the sunbeams, and their stability to the mountains, and to every creature whatsoever operation is for its glory and for others' good. Among all things which are to have unity of membership one with another, there must be difference or variety; and though it is possible that many like things may be made members of one body, yet it is remarkable that this structure appears characteristic of the lower creatures, rather than the higher, as the many legs of the caterpillar, and the many arms and suckers of the radiata, and that, as we rise in order of being, the number of similar members becomes less, and their structure commonly seems based on the principle of the unity of two things by a third, as Plato has it in the Timæus, § II.

Hence, out of the necessity of unity, arises that of variety, a necessity often more vividly, though never so deeply felt, because lying at the surfaces of things, and assisted by an

influential principle of our nature, the love of change, and the power of contrast. Receiving variety, only as that which accomplishes Unity, or makes it perceived, its operation is found to be very precious.

The effect of variety is best exemplified by the melodies of music, wherein, by the differences of the notes, they are connected with each other in certain pleasant relations. This connexion taking place in quantities is *Proportion.*

This influence of apparent proportion—a proportion, be it observed, which has no reference to ultimate ends, but which is itself, seemingly, the end and object of operation in many of the forces of nature—is therefore at the root of all our delight in any beautiful form whatsoever.

It is utterly vain to endeavor to reduce this proportion to finite rules, for it is as various as musical melody, and the laws to which it is subject are of the same general kind, so that the determination of right or wrong proportion is as much a matter of feeling and experience as the appreciation of good musical composition; not but that there is a science of both, and principles which may not be infringed, but that within these limits the liberty of invention is infinite, and the degrees of excellence, infinite also.

## III.—REPOSE.

There is probably no necessity more imperatively felt by the artist, no test more unfailing of the greatness of artistical treatment, than that of the appearance of repose, and yet there is no quality whose semblance in mere matter is more difficult to define or illustrate. Nevertheless, I believe that our instinc-

tive love of it, as well as the cause to which I attribute that love, (although here also, as in the former cases, I contend not for the interpretation, but for the fact,) will be readily allowed by the reader. As opposed to passion, changefulness, or laborious exertion, repose is the especial and separating characteristic of the eternal mind and power; it is the "I am" of the Creator opposed to the "I become" of all creatures; it is the sign alike of the supreme knowledge which is incapable of surprise, the supreme power which is incapable of labor, the supreme volition which is incapable of change; it is the stillness of the beams of the eternal chambers laid upon the variable waters of ministering creatures; and as we saw before that the infinity which was a type of the Divine nature on the one hand, became yet more desirable on the other from its peculiar address to our prison hopes, and to the expectations of an unsatisfied and unaccomplished existence, so the types of this third attribute of the Deity might seem to have been rendered farther attractive to mortal instinct, through the infliction upon the fallen creature of a curse necessitating a labor once unnatural and still most painful, so that the desire of rest planted in the heart is no sensual nor unworthy one, but a longing for renovation and for escape from a state whose every phase is mere preparation for another equally transitory, to one in which permanence shall have become possible through perfection. Hence the great call of Christ to men, that call on which St. Augustine fixed essential expression of Christian hope, is accompanied by the promise of rest; and the death-bequest of Christ to men is "peace."

Hence, I think there is no desire more intense or more exalted than that which exists in all rightly disciplined minds, for the evidences of repose in external signs. I say fearlessly respecting repose, that no work of art can be great without it, and that all art is great in proportion to the appearance

of it. It is the most unfailing test of beauty, whether of matter or of motion; nothing can be ignoble that possesses it, nothing right that has it not; and in strict proportion to its appearance in the work, is the majesty of mind to be inferred in the artificer. Without regard to other qualities, we may look to this for our evidence, and by the search of this alone we may be led to the rejection of all that is base, and the accepting of all that is good and great, for the paths of wisdom are all peace.

We shall see by this light three colossal images standing up side by side, looming in their great rest of spirituality above the whole world-horizon; Phidias, Michael Angelo, and Dante; and then, separated from their great religious thrones only by less fulness and earnestness of faith, Homer and Shakspeare: and from these we may go down step by step among the mighty men of every age, securely and certainly observant of diminished lustre in every appearance of restlessness and effort, until the last trace of true inspiration vanishes in the tottering affectations, or the tortured inanities of modern times. There is no art, no pursuit, whatsoever, but its results may be classed by this test alone; everything of evil is betrayed and winnowed away by it, glitter and confusion and glare of color, inconsistency or absence of thought, forced expression, evil choice of subject, over accumulation of materials, whether in painting or literature; the shallowness of the English schools of art, the strained and disgusting horrors of the French, the distorted feverishness of the German:—pretence, over-decoration, over-division of parts in architecture, and again in music, in acting, in dancing, in whatsoever art, great or mean, there are yet degrees of greatness or meanness entirely dependent on this single quality of repose.

But that which in lifeless things ennobles them by seeming to indicate life, ennobles higher creatures by indicating the

exaltation of their earthly vitality into a Divine vitality; and raising the life of sense into the life of faith—faith, whether we receive it in the sense of adherence to resolution, obedience to law, regardfulness of promise, in which from all time it has been the test as the shield of the true being and life of man, or in the still higher sense of trustfulness in the presence, kindness, and word of God; in which form it has been exhibited under the Christian dispensation. For whether in one or other form, whether the faithfulness of men whose path is chosen and portion fixed, in the following and receiving of that path and portion, as in the Thermopylæ camp; or the happier faithfulness of children in the good giving of their Father, and of subjects in the conduct of their king, as in the "Stand still and see the salvation of God" of the Red Sea shore, there is rest and peacefulness, the "standing still" in both, the quietness of action determined, of spirit unalarmed, of expectation unimpatient: beautiful, even when based only as of old, on the self-command and self-possession, the persistent dignity or the uncalculating love of the creature,* but more beautiful yet when the rest is one of humility instead of pride, and the trust no more in the resolution we have taken, but in the hand we hold.

* "The universal instinct of repose,
The longing for confirmed tranquillity
Inward and outward, humble, yet sublime.
The life where hope and memory are as one.
Earth quiet and unchanged; the human soul
Consistent in self rule; and heaven revealed
To meditation, in that quietness."

WORDSWORTH. Excursion, Book iii.

## IV.—SYMMETRY.

In all perfectly beautiful objects, there is found the opposition of one part to another and a reciprocal balance obtained; in animals the balance being commonly between opposite sides (note the disagreeableness occasioned by the exception in flat fish, having the eyes on one side of the head), but in vegetables the opposition is less distinct, as in the boughs on opposite sides of trees, and the leaves and sprays on each side of the boughs, and in dead matter less perfect still, often amounting only to a certain tendency towards a balance, as in the opposite sides of valleys and alternate windings of streams. In things in which perfect symmetry is from their nature impossible or improper, a balance must be at least in some measure expressed before they can be beheld with pleasure. Hence the necessity of what artists require as opposing lines or masses in composition, the propriety of which, as well as their value, depends chiefly on their inartificial and natural invention. Absolute equality is not required, still less absolute similarity. A mass of subdued color may be balanced by a point of a powerful one, and a long and latent line overpowered by a short and conspicuous one. The only error against which it is necessary to guard the reader with respect to symmetry, is the confounding it with proportion, though it seems strange that the two terms could ever have been used as synonymous. Symmetry is the *opposition* of *equal* quantities to each other. Proportion the *connection* of *unequal* quantities with each other. The property of a tree in sending out equal boughs on opposite sides is symmetrical. Its sending out shorter and smaller towards the top, proportional. In the human face its balance of opposite sides is symmetry, its division upwards, proportion.

Whether the agreeableness of symmetry be in any way referable to its expression of the Aristotelian ἰσότης, that is to say of abstract justice, I leave the reader to determine; I only assert respecting it, that it is necessary to the dignity of every form, and that by the removal of it we shall render the other elements of beauty comparatively ineffectual: though, on the other hand, it is to be observed that it is rather a mode of arrangement of qualities than a quality itself; and hence symmetry has little power over the mind, unless all the other constituents of beauty be found together with it.

## V.—PURITY.

There is one quality which might have escaped us in the consideration of mere matter, namely purity, and yet I think that the original notion of this quality is altogether material, and has only been attributed to color when such color is suggestive of the condition of matter from which we originally received the idea. For I see not in the abstract how one color should be considered purer than another, except as more or less compounded, whereas there is certainly a sense of purity or impurity in the most compound and neutral colors, as well as in the simplest, a quality difficult to define, and which the reader will probably be surprised by my calling the type of energy, with which it has certainly little traceable connexion in the mind.

The only idea which I think can be legitimately connected with purity of matter, is this of vital and energetic connexion among its particles, and the idea of foulness is essentially connected with dissolution and death. Thus the purity

of the rock, contrasted with the foulness of dust or mould, is expressed by the epithet "living," very singularly given in the rock, in almost all languages; singularly I say, because life is almost the last attribute one would ascribe to stone, but for this visible energy and connexion of its particles; and so of water as opposed to stagnancy. And I do not think that, however pure a powder or dust may be, the idea of beauty is ever connected with it, for it is not the mere purity, but the *active* condition of the substance which is desired, so that as soon as it shoots into crystals, or gathers into effervescence, a sensation of active or real purity is received which was not felt in the calcined caput mortuum.

The most lovely objects in nature are only partially transparent. I suppose the utmost possible sense of beauty (of color) is conveyed by a feebly translucent, smooth, but not lustrous surface of white, and pale warm red, subdued by the most pure and delicate greys, as in the finer portions of the human frame; in wreaths of snow, and in white plumage under rose light. A fair forehead outshines its diamond diadem. The sparkle of the cascade withdraws not our eyes from the snowy summits in their evening silence.

With the idea of purity comes that of spirituality, for the essential characteristic of matter is its inertia, whence, by adding to it purity or energy, we may in some measure spiritualize even matter itself. Thus in the descriptions of the Apocalypse it is its purity that fits it for its place in heaven; the river of the water of life that proceeds out of the throne of the Lamb is clear as crystal, and the pavement of the city is pure gold, like unto clear glass

## VI.—MODERATION.

Of objects which, in respect of the qualities hitherto considered, appear to have equal claims to regard, we find, nevertheless, that certain are preferred to others in consequence of an attractive power, usually expressed by the terms "chasteness, refinement, or elegance," and it appears also that things which in other respects have little in them of natural beauty, and are of forms altogether simple and adapted to simple uses, are capable of much distinction and desirableness in consequence of these qualities only. It is of importance to discover the real nature of the ideas thus expressed.

Something of the peculiar meaning of the words is referable to the authority of fashion and the exclusiveness of pride, owing to which that which is the mode of a particular time is submissively esteemed, and that which by its costliness or its rarity is of difficult attainment, or in any way appears to have been chosen as the best of many things (which is the original sense of the words elegant and exquisite), is esteemed for the witness it bears to the dignity of the chooser.

But neither of these ideas are in any way connected with eternal beauty, neither do they at all account for that agreeableness of color and form which is especially termed chasteness, and which it would seem to be a characteristic of rightly trained mind in all things to prefer, and of common minds to reject.

There is, however, another character of artificial productions, to which these terms have partial reference, which it is of some importance to note, that of finish, exactness, or refinement, which are commonly desired in the works of men, owing both to their difficulty of accomplishment and consequent expression of care and power. And there is not a

greater sign of the imperfection of general taste, than its capability of contentment with forms and things which, professing completion, are yet not exact nor complete, as in the vulgar with wax and clay, and china figures, and in bad sculptors with an unfinished and clay-like modelling of surface, and curves and angles of no precision or delicacy. Yet this finish is not a part or constituent of beauty, but the full and ultimate rendering of it. And therefore, as there certainly is admitted a difference of degree in what we call chasteness, even in Divine work (compare the hollyhock or the sunflower with the vale lily), we must seek for it some other explanation and source than this.

And if, bringing down our ideas of it from complicated objects to simple lines and colors, we analyze and regard them carefully, I think we shall be able to trace them to an under-current of constantly agreeable feeling, excited by the appearance in material things of a self-restrained liberty, that is to say, by the image of that acting of God with regard to all his creation, wherein, though free to operate in whatever arbitrary, sudden, violent, or inconstant ways he will, he yet, if we may reverently so speak, restrains in himself this his omnipotent liberty, and works always in consistent modes, called by us laws. And this restraint or moderation, according to the words of Hooker ("that which doth moderate the force and power, that which doth appoint the form and measure of working, the same we term a law"), is in the Deity not restraint, such as it is said of creatures, but, as again says Hooker, "the very being of God is a law to his working," so that every appearance of painfulness or want of power and freedom in material things is wrong and ugly; for the right restraint, the image of Divine operation, is both in them, and in men, a willing and not painful stopping short of the utmost degree to which their power might reach, and the appearance

of fettering or confinement is the cause of ugliness in the one, as the slightest painfulness or effort in restraint is a sign of sin in the other.

I have put this attribute of beauty last, because I consider it the girdle and safeguard of all the rest, and in this respect the most essential of all, for it is possible that a certain degree of beauty may be attained even in the absence of one of its other constituents, as sometimes in some measure without symmetry or without unity. But the least appearance of violence or extravagance, of the want of moderation and restraint, is, I think, destructive of all beauty whatsoever in everything, color, form, motion, language, or thought, giving rise to that which in color we call glaring, in form inelegant, in motion ungraceful, in language coarse, in thought undisciplined, in all unchastened; which qualities are in everything most painful, because the signs of disobedient and irregular operation.

In color it is not red, but rose-color, which is most beautiful, neither such actual green as we find in summer foliage, partly, and in our painting of it constantly; but such grey green as that into which nature modifies her distant tints, or such pale green and uncertain as we see in sunset sky, and in the clefts of the glacier, and the chrysoprase, and the sea-foam. And so of all colors; not that they may not sometimes be deep and full, but that there is a solemn moderation even in their very fulness, and a holy reference beyond and out of their own nature to great harmonies by which they are governed, and in obedience to which is their glory. The very brilliancy and real power of all color is dependent on the chastening of it, as of a voice on its gentleness, and as of action on its calmness, and as all moral vigor on self-command. And therefore as that virtue which men last, and with most difficulty attain unto, and which many attain not at all, and yet,

that which is essential to the conduct and almost to the being of all other virtues, since neither imagination, nor invention, nor industry, nor sensibility, nor energy, nor any other good having, is of full avail without this of self-command, whereby works truly masculine and mighty, are produced, and by the signs of which they are separated from that lower host of things brilliant, magnificent, and redundant, and farther yet from that of the loose, the lawless, the exaggerated, the insolent, and the profane, I would have the necessity of it foremost among all our inculcating, and the name of it largest among all our inscribing, in so far that, over the doors of every school of Art, I would have this one word, relieved out in deep letters of pure gold,—MODERATION.

I proceed more particularly to examine the nature of that second kind of beauty of which I spoke as consisting in "the appearance of felicitous fulfilment of function in living things." I have already noticed the example of very pure and high typical beauty which is to be found in the lines and gradations of unsullied snow: If, passing to the edge of a sheet of it, upon the lower Alps, early in May, we find, as we are nearly sure to find, two or three little round openings pierced in it, and through these emergent, a slender, pensive, fragile flower* whose small, dark, purple-fringed bell hangs down and shudders over the icy cleft that it has cloven, as if partly wondering at its own recent grave, and partly dying of very fatigue after its hard won victory; we shall be, or we ought to be, moved by a totally different impression of loveliness from that which we receive among the dead ice and the idle clouds. There is now uttered to us a call for sympathy, now offered to us an image of moral purpose and achievement, which, however unconscious or senseless the creature may indeed be that so seems to call, cannot be heard without affection, nor contemplated without

* Soldanella Alpina.

worship, by any of us whose heart is rightly tuned, or whose mind is clearly and surely sighted.

Throughout the whole of the organic creation every being in a perfect state exhibits certain appearances, or evidences, of happiness, and besides is in its nature, its desires, its modes of nourishment, habitation, and death, illustrative or expressive of certain moral dispositions or principles. Now, first, in the keenness of the sympathy which we feel in the happiness, real or apparent, of all organic beings, and which, as we shall presently see, invariably prompts us, from the joy we have in it, to look upon those as most lovely which are most happy; and secondly, in the justness of the moral sense which rightly reads the lesson they are all intended to teach, and classes them in orders of worthiness and beauty according to the rank and nature of that lesson, whether it be of warning or example.

Its first perfection, therefore, relating to vital beauty, is the kindness and unselfish fulness of heart, which receives the utmost amount of pleasure from the happiness of all things. Of which in high degree the heart of man is incapable, neither what intense enjoyment the angels may have in all that they see of things that move and live, and in the part they take in the shedding of God's kindness upon them, can we know or conceive: only in proportion as we draw near to God, and are made in measure like unto him, can we increase this our possession of charity, of which the entire essence is in God only.

Wherefore it is evident that even the ordinary exercise of this faculty implies a condition of the whole moral being in some measure right and healthy, and that to the entire exercise of it there is necessary the entire perfection of the Christian character, for he who loves not God, nor his brother, cannot love the grass beneath his feet and the creatures that fill those spaces in the universe which he needs not, and which live not for his uses; nay, he has seldom grace to be grateful even to

those that love him and serve him, while, on the other hand, none can love God nor his human brother without loving all things which his Father loves, nor without looking upon them every one as in that respect his brethren also, and perhaps worthier than he, if in the under concords they have to fill, their part is touched more truly.

For it is matter of easy demonstration, that setting the characters of typical beauty aside, the pleasure afforded by every organic form is in proportion to its appearance of healthy vital energy; as in a rose bush, setting aside all the considerations of gradated flushing of color and fair folding of line, which it shares with the cloud or the snow-wreath, we find in and through all this certain signs pleasant and acceptable as signs of life and enjoyment in the particular individual plant itself. Every leaf and stalk is seen to have a function, to be constantly exercising that function, and as it seems *solely* for the good and enjoyment of the plant.

## BEAUTY IN ANIMALS.

Of eyes we shall find those ugliest which have in them no expression nor life whatever, but a corpse-like stare, or an indefinite meaningless glaring, as in some lights, those of owls and cats, and mostly of insects and of all creatures in which the eye seems rather an external, optical instrument than a bodily member through which emotion and virtue of soul may be expressed (as pre-eminently in the chameleon), because the seeming want of sensibility and vitality in a living creature is the most painful of all wants. And next to

these in ugliness come the eyes that gain vitality indeed, but only by means of the expression of intense malignity, as in the serpent and alligator; and next to these, to whose malignity is added the virtue of subtlety and keenness, as of the lynx and hawk; and then, by diminishing the malignity and increasing the expressions of comprehensiveness and determination, we arrive at those of the lion and eagle, and at last, by destroying malignity altogether, at the fair eye of the herbivorous tribes, wherein the superiority of beauty consists always in the greater or less sweetness and gentleness primarily, as in the gazelle, camel, and ox, and in the greater or less intellect, secondarily, as in the horse and dog, and finally, in gentleness and intellect both in man. And again, taking the mouth, another source of expression, we find it ugliest where it has none, as mostly in fish, or perhaps where, without gaining much in expression of any kind, it becomes a formidable destructive instrument, as again in the alligator, and then, by some increase of expression, we arrive at birds' beaks, wherein there is more obtained by the different ways of setting on the mandibles than is commonly supposed (compare the bills of the duck and the eagle), and thence we reach the finely-developed lips of the carnivora, which nevertheless lose that beauty they have, in the actions of snarling and biting, and from these we pass to the nobler because gentler and more sensible, of the horse, camel, and fawn, and so again up to man, only there is less traceableness of the principle in the mouths of the lower animals, because they are in slight measure only capable of expression, and chiefly used as instruments, and that of low function, whereas in man the mouth is given most definitely as a means of expression, beyond and above its lower functions.

We are to take it for granted, that every creature of God is in some way good, and has a duty and specific operation

providentially accessory to the well-being of all; we are to look in this faith to that employment and nature of each, and to derive pleasure from their entire perfection and fitness for the duty they have to do, and in their entire fulfilment of it; and so we are to take pleasure and find beauty in the magnificent binding together of the jaws of the ichthyosaurus for catching and holding, and in the adaptation of the lion for springing, and of the locust for destroying, and of the lark for singing, and in every creature for the doing of that which God has made it to do.

## HUMAN BEAUTY.

We come at last to set ourselves face to face with ourselves, expecting that in creatures made after the image of God we are to find comeliness and completion more exquisite than in the fowls of the air and the things that pass through the paths of the sea.

But behold now a sudden change from all former experience. No longer among the individuals of the race is there equality or likeness, a distributed fairness and fixed type visible in each, but evil diversity, and terrible stamp of various degradation; features seamed with sickness, dimmed by sensuality, convulsed by passion, pinched by poverty, shadowed by sorrow, branded with remorse; bodies consumed with sloth, broken down by labor, tortured by disease, dishonored in foul uses; intellects without power, hearts without hope, minds earthly and devilish; our bones full of the sin of our youth, the heaven revealing our iniquity, the earth rising

up against us, the roots dried up beneath, and the branch cut off above; well for us only, if, after beholding this our natural face in a glass, we desire not straightway to forget what manner of men we be.

Herein there is at last something, and too much, for that short, stopping intelligence and dull perception of ours to accomplish, whether in earnest fact, or in the seeking for the outward image of beauty:—to undo the devil's work, to restore to the body the grace and the power which inherited disease has destroyed, to return to the spirit the purity, and to the intellect the grasp that they had in Paradise. Now, first of all, this work, be it observed, is in no respect a work of imagination. Wrecked we are, and nearly all to pieces; but that little good by which we are to redeem ourselves is to be got out of the old wreck, beaten about and full of sand though it be; and not out of that desert island of pride on which the devils split first, and we after them: and so the only restoration of the body that we can reach is not to be coined out of our fancies, but to be collected out of such uninjured and bright vestiges of the old seal as we can find and set together; and so the ideal of the features, as the good and perfect soul is seen in them, is not to be reached by imagination, but by the seeing and reaching forth of the better part of the soul to that of which it must first know the sweetness and goodness in itself, before it can much desire, or rightly find, the signs of it in others.

The operation of the mind upon the body, and evidence of t thereon, may be considered under three heads:—

First, the intellectual powers upon the features, in the fine cutting and chiselling of them, and removal from them of signs of sensuality and sloth, by which they are blunted and deadened, and substitution of energy and intensity for vacancy and insipidity (by which wants alone the faces of many fair

women are utterly spoiled, and rendered valueless), and by the keenness given to the eye, and fine moulding and development to the brow.

The second point to be considered in the influence of mind upon body, is the mode of operation and conjunction of the moral feelings on and with the intellectual powers, and then their conjoint influence on the bodily form. Now, the operation of the right moral feelings on the intellectual is always for the good of the latter, for it is not possible that selfishness should reason rightly in any respect, but must be blind in its estimation of the worthiness of all things, neither anger, for that overpowers the reason or outcries it, neither sensuality, for that overgrows and chokes it, neither agitation, for that has no time to compare things together, neither enmity, for that must be unjust, neither fear, for that exaggerates all things, neither cunning and deceit, for that which is voluntarily untrue will soon be unwittingly so: but the great reasoners are self-command, and trust unagitated, and deep-looking Love, and Faith, which, as she is above Reason, so she best holds the reins of it from her high seat: so that they err grossly who think of the right development even of the intellectual type as possible, unless we look to higher sources of beauty first. For there is not any virtue the exercise of which, even momentarily, will not impress a new fairness upon the features; neither on them only, but on the whole body, both the intelligence and the moral faculties have operation, for even all the movement and gestures, however slight, are different in their modes according to the mind that governs them, and on the gentleness and decision of just feeling there follows a grace of action, and through continuance of this a grace of form, which by no discipline may be taught or attained.

The third point to be considered with respect to the cor-

poreal expression of mental character is, that there is a certain period of the soul culture when it begins to interfere with some of the characters of typical beauty belonging to the bodily frame, the stirring of the intellect wearing down the flesh, and the moral enthusiasm burning its way out to heaven, through the emaciation of the earthen vessel; and that there is, in this indication of subduing of the mortal by the immortal part, an ideal glory of perhaps a purer and higher range than that of the more perfect material form. We conceive, I think, more nobly of the weak presence of Paul than of the fair and ruddy countenance of Daniel.

The love of the human race is increased by their individual differences, and the unity of the creature made perfect by each having something to bestow and to receive, bound to the rest by a thousand various necessities and various gratitudes, humility in each rejoicing to admire in his fellow that which he finds not in himself, and each being in some respect the complement of his race.

In investigating the signs of the ideal, or perfect type of humanity, we must distinguish between differences conceivably existing in a perfect state, and differences resulting from immediate and present operation of the Adamite curse.

As it is impossible that any essence short of the Divine, should at the same instant be equally receptive of all emotions, those emotions which, by right and order, have the most usual victory, both leave the stamp of their habitual presence on the body, and render the individual more and more susceptible of them in proportion to the frequency of their prevalent recurrence; added to which, causes of distinctive character are to be taken into account, the differences of age and sex, which, though seemingly of more finite influence, cannot be banished from any human conception. David, ruddy and of a fair countenance, with the brook stone of deliverance in

his hand, is not more ideal than David leaning on the old age of Barzillai, returning chastened to his kingly home. And they who are as the angels of God in heaven, yet cannot be conceived as so assimilated that their different experiences and affections upon earth shall then be forgotten and effect less: the child taken early to his place cannot be imagined to wear there such a body, nor to have such thoughts, as the glorified apostle who has finished his course and kept the faith on earth. And so whatever perfections and likeness of love we may attribute to either the tried or the crowned creatures, there is the difference of the stars in glory among them yet; differences of original gifts, though not of occupying till their Lord come, different dispensations of trial and of trust, of sorrow and support, both in their own inward, variable hearts, and in their positions of exposure or of peace, of the gourd shadow and the smiting sun, of calling at heat of day or eleventh hour, of the house unroofed by faith, and the clouds opened by revelation; differences in warning, in mercies, in sicknesses, in signs, in time of calling to account; like only they all are by that which is not of them, but the gift of God's unchangeable mercy. "I will give unto this last even as unto thee."

Those signs of evil which are commonly most manifest on the human features are roughly divisible into these four kinds: the signs of pride, of sensuality, of fear, and of cruelty. Any one of which will destroy the ideal character of the countenance and body.

Now of these, the first, pride, is perhaps the most destructive of all the four, seeing it is the undermost and original story of all sin.

The second destroyer of human beauty, is the appearance of sensual character, more difficult to trace, owing to its peculiar subtlety.

"Of all God's works, which doe this worlde adorn,
There is no one more faire, and excellent
Than is man's body both for power and forme
Whiles it is kept in sober government.
But none than it more foul and indecent
Distempered through misrule and passions bace."

Respecting those two other vices of the human face, the expressions of fear and ferocity, these only occasionally enter into the conception of character.

Among the children of God, while there is always that fearful and bowed apprehension of his majesty, and that sacred dread of all offence to him, which is called the fear of God, yet of real and essential fear there is not any, but clinging of confidence to him, as their Rock, Fortress, and Deliverer, and perfect love, and casting out of fear, so that it is not possible that while the mind is rightly bent on him, there should be dread of anything either earthly or supernatural, and the more dreadful seems the height of his majesty, the less fear they feel that dwell in the shadow of it ("Of whom shall I be afraid?") so that they are as David was, devoted to his fear; whereas, on the other hand, those who, if they may help it, never conceive of God, but thrust away all thought and memory of him, and in his real terribleness and omnipresence fear him not nor know him, yet are of real, acute, piercing, and ignoble fear, haunted for evermore; fear inconceiving and desperate that calls to the rocks, and hides in the dust; and hence the peculiar baseness of the expression of terror, a baseness attributed to it in all times, and among all nations, as of a passion atheistical, brutal, and profane. So also, it is always joined with ferocity, which is of all passions the least human; for of sensual desires there is license to men, as necessity; and of vanity there is intellectual cause, so that when seen in a brute it is pleasant, and a sign of good wit; and of fear there is at times necessity and excuse,

as being allowed for prevention of harm; but of ferocity there is no excuse nor palliation, but it is pure essence of tiger and demon, and it casts on the human face the paleness alike of the horse of Death, and the ashes of hell.

These, then, are the four passions whose presence in any degree on the human face is degradation. But of all passion it is to be generally observed, that it becomes ignoble either when entertained respecting unworthy objects, and therefore shallow or unjustifiable, or when of impious violence, and so destructive of human dignity. Thus grief is noble or the reverse, according to the dignity and worthiness of the object lamented, and the grandeur of the mind enduring it. The sorrow of mortified vanity or avarice is simply disgusting, even that of bereaved affection may be base if selfish and unrestrained. All grief that convulses the features is ignoble, because it is commonly shallow and certainly temporary, as in children, though in the shock and shiver of a strong man's features under sudden and violent grief there may be something of sublime.

> "That beauty is not, as fond men misdeem
> An outward show of things, that only seem;
> But that fair lamp, from whose celestial ray
> That light proceeds, which kindleth lovers' fire,
> Shall never be extinguished nor decay.
> But when the vital spirits do expire,
> Unto her native planet shall retire,
> For it is heavenly born and cannot die,
> Being a parcel of the purest sky."

## THE IDEAL.

The perfect *idea* of the form and condition in which all the properties of the species are fully developed, is called the ideal of the species. The question of the nature of ideal conception of species, and of the mode in which the mind arrives at it, has been the subject of so much discussion, and source of so much embarrassment, chiefly owing to that unfortunate distinction between idealism and realism which leads most people to imagine the ideal opposed to the real, and therefore *false*, that I think it necessary to request the reader's most careful attention to the following positions.

Any work of art which represents, not a material object, but the mental conception of a material object, is in the primary sense of the word ideal; that is to say, it represents an idea, and not a thing. Any work of art which represents or realizes a material object, is, in the primary sense of the term, unideal.

Ideal works of art, therefore, in this first sense, represent the result of an act of imagination, and are good or bad in proportion to the healthy condition and general power of the imagination, whose acts they represent.

Unideal works of art (the studious production of which is termed realism) represent actual existing things, and are good or bad in proportion to the perfection of the representation.

All entirely bad works of art may be divided into those which, professing to be imaginative, bear no stamp of imagination, and are therefore false, and those which professing to be representative of matter, miss of the representation and are therefore nugatory.

The ideal, therefore, of the park oak is full size, united terminal curve, equal and symmetrical range of branches on each side. The ideal of the mountain oak may be anything,

twisting, and leaning, and shattered, and rock-encumbered, so only that amidst all its misfortunes, it maintain the dignity of oak; and, indeed, I look upon this kind of tree as more ideal than the other, in so far as by its efforts and struggles, more of its nature, enduring power, patience in waiting for, and ingenuity in obtaining what it wants, is brought out, and so more of the essence of oak exhibited, than under more fortunate conditions.

The ranunculus glacialis might perhaps, by cultivation, be blanched from its wan and corpse-like paleness to purer white, and won to more branched and lofty development of its ragged leaves. But the ideal of the plant is to be found only in the last, loose stones of the moraine, alone there; wet with the cold, unkindly drip of the glacier water, and trembling as the loose and steep dust to which it clings yields ever and anon, and shudders and crumbles away from about its root.

And if it be asked how this conception of the utmost beauty of ideal form is consistent with what we formerly argued respecting the pleasantness of the appearance of felicity in the creature, let it be observed, and for ever held, that the right and true happiness of every creature, is in this very discharge of its function, and in those efforts by which its strength and inherent energy are developed: and that the repose of which we also spoke as necessary to all beauty, is, as was then stated, repose not of inanition, nor of luxury, nor of irresolution, but the repose of magnificent energy and being; in action, the calmness of trust and determination; in rest, the consciousness of duty accomplished and of victory won, and this repose and this felicity can take place as well in the midst of trial and tempest, as beside the waters of comfort; they perish only when the creature is either unfaithful to itself, or is afflicted by circumstances unnatural and malignant to its being, and for the contending with which it was neither fitted nor ordained.

Hence that rest which is indeed glorious is of the chamois couched breathless on his granite bed, not of the stalled ox over his fodder; and that happiness which is indeed beautiful is in the bearing of those trial tests which are appointed for the proving of every creature, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Of all creatures whose existence involves birth, progress, and dissolution, ideality is predicable all through their existence, so that they be perfect with reference to their supposed period of being. Thus there is an ideal of infancy, of youth, of old age, of death, and of decay. But when the ideal form of the species is spoken of or conceived in general terms, the form is understood to be of that period when the generic attributes are perfectly developed, and previous to the commencement of their decline. At which period all the characters of vital and typical beauty are commonly most concentrated in them, though the arrangement and proportion of these characters varies at different periods, youth having more of the vigorous beauty, and age of the reposing; youth of typical outward fairness, and age of expanded and etherealized moral expression; the babe, again, in some measure atoning in gracefulness for its want of strength, so that the balanced glory of the creature continues in solemn interchange, perhaps even

> "Filling more and more with crystal light,
> As pensive evening deepens into night."

Our purity of taste is best tested by its universality. If we can only admire this thing or that, we may be sure that our cause for liking is of a finite and false nature. But if we can perceive beauty in everything of God's doing, we may argue that we have reached the true perception of its universal laws. Hence, false taste may be known by its fastidiousness, by its demands of pomp, splendor, and unusual combination; by its enjoyment only of particular styles and modes of things, and

by its pride also, for it is for ever meddling, mending, accumulating, and self-exulting, its eye is always upon itself, and it tests all things around it by the way they fit it. But true taste is for ever growing, learning, reading, worshipping, laying its hand upon its mouth because it is astonished, casting its shoes from off its feet because it finds all ground holy, lamenting over itself, and testing itself by the way that it fits things. And it finds whereof to feed, and whereby to grow, in all things, and therefore the complaint so often made by young artists that they have not within their reach materials, or subjects enough for their fancy, is utterly groundless, and the sign only of their own blindness and inefficiency; for there is that to be seen in every street and lane of every city—that to be felt and found in every human heart and countenance, that to be loved in every road-side weed and moss-grown wall, which, in the hands of faithful men, may convey emotions of glory and sublimity, continual and exalted.

# Part 2

# NATURE.

"Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy; for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
Is full of blessings."

WORDSWORTH.

# Part 2.

## NATURE.

### THE SKY.

It is a strange thing how little in general people know about the sky. It is the part of creation in which nature has done more for the sake of pleasing man, more for the sole and evident purpose of talking to him and teaching him, than in any other of her works, and it is just the part in which we least attend to her. There are not many of her other works in which some more material or essential purpose than the mere pleasing of man is not answered by every part of their organization; but every essential purpose of the sky might, so far as we know, be answered, if once in three days, or thereabouts, a great ugly black rain cloud were brought up over the blue, and everything well watered, and so all left blue again till next time, with perhaps a film of morning and evening mist for dew. And instead of this, there is not a moment of any day of our lives, when nature is not producing scene after scene, picture after picture, glory after glory, and working still upon such exquisite and constant principles of the most perfect beauty, that it is quite certain it is all done for us, and intended for our perpetual pleasure. And every man, wherever placed, however far from other sources of interest or of beauty, has this doing for him constantly. The noblest scenes of the earth can be seen and known but by few; it is not intended that man should live always in the midst of

them, he injures them by his presence, he ceases to feel them if he be always with them; but the sky is for all; bright as it is, it is not "too bright, nor good, for human nature's daily food;" it is fitted in all its functions for the perpetual comfort and exalting of the heart, for the soothing it and purifying it from its dross and dust. Sometimes gentle, sometimes capricious, sometimes awful, never the same for two moments together; almost human in its passions, almost spiritual in its tenderness, almost divine in its infinity, its appeal to what is immortal in us, is as distinct, as its ministry of chastisement or of blessing to what is mortal is essential. And yet we never attend to it, we never make it a subject of thought, but as it has to do with our animal sensations; we look upon all by which it speaks to us more clearly than to brutes, upon all which bears witness to the intention of the Supreme, that we are to receive more from the covering vault than the light and the dew which we share with the weed and the worm, only as a succession of meaningless and monotonous accident, too common and too vain to be worthy of a moment of watchfulness, or a glance of admiration. If in our moments of utter idleness and insipidity, we turn to the sky as a last resource, which of its phenomena do we speak of? One says it has been wet, and another it has been windy, and another it has been warm. Who, among the whole chattering crowd, can tell me of the forms and the precipices of the chain of tall white mountains that girded the horizon at noon yesterday? Who saw the narrow sunbeam that came out of the south and smote upon their summits until they melted and mouldered away in a dust of blue rain? Who saw the dance of the dead clouds when the sunlight left them last night, and the west wind blew them before it like withered leaves? All has passed, unregretted as unseen; or if the apathy be ever shaken off, even for an instant, it is only by what is gross, or

what is extraordinary; and yet it is not in the broad and fierce manifestations of the elemental energies, not in the clash of the hail, nor the drift of the whirlwind, that the highest characters of the sublime are developed. God is not in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice. They are but the blunt and low faculties of our nature, which can only be addressed through lampblack and lightning. It is in quiet and subdued passages of unobtrusive majesty, the deep, and the calm, and the perpetual,—that which must be sought ere it is seen, and loved ere it is understood,—things which the angels work out for us daily, and yet vary eternally, which are never wanting, and never repeated, which are to be found always yet each found but once; it is through these that the lesson of devotion is chiefly taught, and the blessing of beauty given. These are what the artist of highest aim must study; it is these, by the combination of which his ideal is to be created; these, of which so little notice is ordinarily taken by common observers, that I fully believe, little as people in general are concerned with art, more of their ideas of sky are derived from pictures than from reality, and that if we could examine the conception formed in the minds of most educated persons when we talk of clouds, it would frequently be found composed of fragments of blue and white reminiscences of the old masters.

> "The chasm of sky above my head
> Is Heaven's profoundest azure. No domain
> For fickle, short-lived clouds, to occupy,
> Or to pass through; but rather an *abyss*
> In which the everlasting stars abide,
> And whose soft gloom, and boundless depth, might tempt
> The curious eye to look for them by day."

And, in his American Notes, I remember Dickens notices the same truth, describing himself as lying drowsily on the barge

deck, looking not at, but *through* the sky. And if you look intensely at the pure blue of a serene sky, you will see that there is a variety and fulness in its very repose. It is not flat dead color, but a deep, quivering, transparent body of penetrable air, in which you trace or imagine short, falling spots of deceiving light, and dim shades, faint, veiled vestiges of dark vapor.

It seems to me that in the midst of the material nearness of the heavens God means us to acknowledge His own immediate presence as visiting, judging, and blessing us. "The earth shook, the heavens also dropped, at the presence of God." "He doth set his bow in the cloud," and thus renews, in the sound of every drooping swathe of rain, his promises of everlasting love. "In them hath he set a *tabernacle* for the sun;" whose burning ball, which without the firmament would be seen as an intolerable and scorching circle in the blackness of vacuity, is by that firmament surrounded with gorgeous service, and tempered by mediatorial ministries; by the firmament of clouds the golden pavement is spread for his chariot wheels at morning; by the firmament of clouds the temple is built for his presence to fill with light at noon; by the firmament of clouds the purple veil is closed at evening round the sanctuary of his rest; by the mists of the firmament his implacable light is divided, and its separated fierceness appeased into the soft blue that fills the depth of distance with its bloom, and the flush with which the mountains burn as they drink the overflowing of the dayspring. And in this tabernacling of the unendurable sun with men, through the shadows of the firmament, God would seem to set forth the stooping of His own majesty to men, upon the *throne* of the firmament. As the Creator of all the worlds, and the Inhabiter of eternity, we cannot behold Him; but as the Judge of the earth and the Preserver of men, those heavens are indeed His dwelling

place. "Swear not, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool." And all those passings to and fro of fruitful shower and grateful shade, and all those visions of silver palaces built about the horizon, and voices of moaning winds and threatening thunders, and glories of colored robe and cloven ray, are but to deepen in our hearts the acceptance, and distinctness, and dearness of the simple words, "Our Father, which art in heaven."

## CLOUDS.

The first and most important character of clouds, is dependent on the different altitudes at which they are formed. The atmosphere may be conveniently considered as divided into three spaces, each inhabited by clouds of specific character altogether different, though, in reality, there is no distinct limit fixed between them by nature, clouds being formed at *every* altitude, and partaking, according to their altitude, more or less of the characters of the upper or lower regions. The scenery of the sky is thus formed of an infinitely graduated series of systematic forms of clouds, each of which has its own region in which alone it is formed, and each of which has specific characters which can only be properly determined by comparing them as they are found clearly distinguished by intervals of considerable space. I shall therefore consider the sky as divided into three regions—the upper region, or region of the cirrus; the central region, or region of the stratus; the lower region, or the region of the rain-cloud.

The clouds which I wish to consider as included in the upper region, never touch even the highest mountains of Europe,

and may therefore be looked upon as never formed below an elevation of at least 15,000 feet; they are the motionless multitudinous lines of delicate vapor with which the blue of the open sky is commonly streaked or speckled after several days of fine weather. I must be pardoned for giving a detailed description of their specific characters, as they are of constant occurrence in the works of modern artists, and I shall have occasion to speak frequently of them in future parts of the work. Their chief characters are—

First, Symmetry: they are nearly always arranged in some definite and evident order, commonly in long ranks, reaching sometimes from the zenith to the horizon, each rank composed of an infinite number of transverse bars of about the same length, each bar thickest in the middle, and terminating in a traceless vaporous point at each side; the ranks are in the direction of the wind, and the bars of course at right angles to it. The groups of fine, silky, parallel fibres, terminating in a plumy sweep, are vulgarly known as "mares' tails."

Secondly, Sharpness of Edge: The edges of the bars of the upper clouds which are turned to the wind are often the sharpest which the sky shows; no outline whatever of any other kind of cloud, however marked and energetic, ever approaches the delicate decision of those edges.

Thirdly, Multitude: The delicacy of these vapors is sometimes carried into an infinity of division. Nor is nature content with an infinity of bars or lines alone—each bar is in its turn severed into a number of small undulatory masses, more or less connected according to the violence of the wind. When this division is merely effected by undulation, the cloud exactly resembles sea-sand ribbed by the tide; but when the division amounts to real separation we have the mottled or "mackerel" skies.

Fourthly, Purity of Color: The nearest of these clouds—

those over the observer's head, being at least three miles above him, and nearly all entering the ordinary sphere of vision, farther from him still,—their dark sides are much grayer and cooler than those of other clouds, owing to their distance. They are composed of the purest aqueous vapor, free from all foulness of earthy gases, and of this in the lightest and most ethereal state in which it can be, to be visible. Farther, they receive the light of the sun in a state of far greater intensity than lower objects, the beams being transmitted to them through atmospheric air far less dense, and wholly unaffected by mist, smoke, or any other impurity. Hence their colors are more pure and vivid, and their white less sullied than those of any other clouds.

Lastly, Variety: Variety is never so conspicuous, as when it is united with symmetry. The perpetual change of form in other clouds, is monotonous in its very dissimilarity, nor is difference striking where no connection is implied; but if through a range of barred clouds, crossing half the heaven, all governed by the same forces and falling into one general form, there be yet a marked and evident dissimilarity between each member of the great mass—one more finely drawn, the next more delicately moulded, the next more gracefully bent—each broken into differently modelled and variously numbered groups, the variety is doubly striking, because contrasted with the perfect symmetry of which it forms a part.

Under all, perhaps the massy outline of some lower cloud moves heavily across the motionless buoyancy of the upper lines, and indicates at once their elevation and their repose.

A fine and faithful description of these clouds is given by Wordsworth in "The Excursion."

"But rays of light
Now suddenly diverging from the orb,

Retired behind the mountain tops, or veiled
By the dense air, shot upwards to the crown
Of the blue firmament—aloft—and wide:
And multitudes of little floating clouds,
Ere we, who saw, of change were conscious, pierced
Through their ethereal texture, had become
Vivid as fire,—Clouds separately poised,
Innumerable multitude of forms
Scattered through half the circle of the sky;
And giving back, and shedding each on each,
With prodigal communion, the bright hues
Which from the unapparent fount of glory
They had imbibed, and ceased not to receive.
That which the heavens displayed the liquid deep
Repeated, but with unity sublime."

Their slow movement Shelley has beautifully touched —

"Underneath the young gray dawn
A multitude of dense, white fleecy clouds,
Were wandering in thick flocks along the mountains,
*Shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind.*"

If you watch for the next sunset, when there are a considerable number of these cirri in the sky, you will see, especially at the zenith, that the sky does not remain of the same color for two inches together; one cloud has a dark side of cold blue, and a fringe of milky white; another, above it, has a dark side of purple and an edge of red; another, nearer the sun, has an under-side of orange and an edge of gold; these you will find mingled with, and passing into the blue of the sky, which in places you will not be able to distinguish from the cool grey of the darker clouds, and which will be itself full of gradation, now pure and deep, now faint and feeble; and all this is done, not in large pieces, nor on a large scale, but over and over again in every square yard, so that there is

no single part nor portion of the whole sky which has not in itself variety of color enough for a separate picture, and yet no single part which is like another, or which has not some peculiar source of beauty, and some peculiar arrangement of color of its own.

## THE CENTRAL CLOUD REGION,

I CONSIDER as including all clouds which are the usual characteristic of ordinary serene weather, and which touch and envelope the mountains of Switzerland; they may be considered as occupying a space of air ten thousand feet in height, extending from five to fifteen thousand feet above the sea.

These clouds, according to their elevation, appear with great variety of form, often partaking of the streaked or mottled character of the higher region, and as often, when the precursors of storm, manifesting forms closely connected with the lowest rain clouds; but the species especially characteristic of the central region is a white, ragged, irregular, and scattered vapor, which has little form and less color.

But although this kind of cloud is, as I have said, typical of the central region, it is not one which nature is fond of. She scarcely ever lets an hour pass without some manifestation of finer forms, sometimes approaching the upper cirri, sometimes the lower cumulus. And then in the lower outlines, we have the nearest approximation which nature ever presents to the clouds of Claude, Salvator, and Poussin. When vapor collects into masses, it is partially rounded, clumsy, and ponderous, as if it would tumble out of the sky, shaded with a dull gray, and totally devoid of any appear-

ance of energy or motion. Even in nature, these clouds are comparatively uninteresting, scarcely worth raising our heads to look at; and on canvas, valuable only as a means of introducing light, and breaking the monotony of blue; yet they are, perhaps, beyond all others the favorite clouds of the Dutch masters.

The originality and vigor of separate conception in cloud forms, give to the scenery of the sky a force and variety no less delightful than that of the changes of mountain outline in a hill district of great elevation; and there is added to this a spirit-like feeling, a capricious, mocking imagery of passion and life, totally different from any effects of inanimate form that the earth can show.

The minor contours, out of which the larger outlines are composed, are indeed beautifully curvilinear; but they are never monotonous in their curves. First comes a concave line, then a convex one, then an angular jag, breaking off into spray, then a downright straight line, then a curve again, then a deep gap, and a place where all is lost and melted away, and so on; displaying in every inch of the form renewed and ceaseless invention, setting off grace with rigidity, and relieving flexibility with force, in a manner scarcely less admirable, and far more changeful than even in the muscular forms of the human frame. Nay, such is the exquisite composition of all this, that you may take any single fragment of any cloud in the sky, and you will find it put together as if there had been a year's thought over the plan of it, arranged with the most studied inequality—with the most delicate symmetry—with the most elaborate contrast, a picture in itself. You may try every other piece of cloud in the heaven, and you will find them every one as perfect, and yet not one in the least like another.

When rain falls on a mountain composed chiefly of barren

rocks, their surfaces, being violently heated by the sun, whose most intense warmth always precedes rain, occasion sudden and violent evaporation, actually converting the first shower into steam. Consequently, upon all such hills, on the commencement of rain, white volumes of vapor are instantaneously and universally formed, which rise, are absorbed by the atmosphere, and again descend in rain, to rise in fresh volumes until the surfaces of the hills are cooled. Where there is grass or vegetation, this effect is diminished; where there is foliage it scarcely takes place at all. Now this effect has evidently been especially chosen by Turner for Loch Coriskin, not only because it enabled him to relieve its jagged forms with veiling vapor, but to tell the tale which no pencilling could, the story of its utter absolute barrenness of unlichened, dead, desolate rock:—

"The wildest glen, but this, can show
Some touch of nature's genial glow,
On high Benmore green mosses grow
And heath-bells bud in deep Glencoe.
And copse on Cruchan Ben;
But here, above, around, below,
On mountain, or in glen,
Nor tree, nor plant, nor shrub, nor flower,
Nor ought of vegetative power,
The wearied eye may ken;
But all its rocks at random thrown,
Black waves, bare crags, and banks of stone.'

LORD OF THE ISLES, Canto III.

"Be as a Presence or a motion—one
Among the many there—while the mists
Flying, and rainy vapors, call out shapes
And phantoms from the crags and solid earth,
As fast as a musician scatters sounds
Out of an instrument."—

Stand upon the peak of some isolated mountain at day break, when the night-mists first rise from off the plains, and watch their white and lake-like fields as they float in level bays and winding gulphs about the islanded summits of the lower hills, untouched yet by more than dawn, colder and more quiet than a windless sea under the moon of midnight. Watch when the first sunbeam is sent upon the silver channels, how the foam of their undulating surface parts and passes away; and down under their depths the glittering city and green pasture lie like Atlantis, between the white paths of winding rivers; the flakes of light falling every moment faster and broader among the starry spires, as the wreathed surges break and vanish above them, and the confused crests and ridges of the dark hills shorten their gray shadows upon the plain. Wait a little longer, and you shall see those scattered mists rallying in the ravines and floating up towards you, along the winding valleys, till they couch in quiet masses, iridescent with the morning light, upon the broad breasts of the higher hills, whose leagues of massy undulation will melt back and back into that robe of material light, until they fade away, lost in its lustre, to appear again above, in the serene heaven, like a wild, bright, impossible dream, foundationless and inaccessible, their very bases vanishing in the unsubstantial and mocking blue of the deep lake below. Wait yet a little longer, and you shall see those mists gather themselves into white towers, and stand like fortresses along the promontories, massy and motionless, only piling with every instant higher and higher into the sky, and casting longer shadows athwart the rocks; and out of the pale blue of the horizon you will see forming and advancing a troop of narrow, dark, pointed vapors, which will cover the sky, inch by inch, with their gray network, and take the light off the landscape with an eclipse which will stop the singing of the birds and the

motion of the leaves together; and then you will see horizontal bars of black shadow forming under them, and lurid wreaths create themselves, you know not how, along the shoulders of the hills; you never see them form, but when you look back to a place which was clear an instant ago, there is a cloud on it, hanging by the precipices, as a hawk pauses over his prey. And then you will hear the sudden rush of the awakened wind, and you will see those watch-towers of vapor swept away from their foundations, and waving curtains of opaque rain let down to the valleys, swinging from the burdened clouds in black, bending fringes, or pacing in pale columns along the lake level, grazing its surface into foam as they go. And then, as the sun sinks, you shall see the storm drift for an instant from off the hills, leaving their broad sides smoking, and loaded yet with snow-white, torn, steam-like rags of capricious vapor, now gone, now gathered again; while the smouldering sun, seeming not far away, but burning like a red-hot ball beside you, and as if you could reach it, plunges through the rushing wind and rolling cloud with headlong fall, as if it meant to rise no more, dyeing all the air about it with blood. And then you shall hear the fainting tempest die in the hollow of the night, and you shall see a green halo kindling on the summit of the eastern hills, brighter—brighter yet, till the large white circle of the slow moon is lifted up among the barred clouds, step by step, line by line; star after star she quenches with her kindling light, setting in their stead an army of pale, penetrable, fleecy wreaths in the heaven, to give light upon the earth, which move together, hand in hand, company by company, troop by troop, so measured in their unity of motion, that the whole heaven seems to roll with them, and the earth to reel under them. And then wait yet for one hour, until the east again becomes purple, and the heaving mountains, rolling against it in darkness, like waves

of a wild sea, are drowned one by one in the glory of its burning; watch the white glaciers blaze in their winding paths about the mountains, like mighty serpents, with scales of fire; watch the columnar peaks of solitary snow, kindling downwards, chasm by chasm, each in itself a new morning; their long avalanches cast down in keen streams brighter than the lightning, sending each his tribute of driven snow, like altar-smoke, up to the heaven; the rose-light of their silent domes flushing that heaven about them and above them, piercing with purer light through its purple lines of lifted cloud, casting a new glory on every wreath as it passes by, until the whole heaven—one scarlet canopy—is interwoven with a roof of waving flame, and tossing, vault beyond vault, as with the drifted wings of many companies of angels; and then, when you can look no more for gladness, and when you are bowed down with fear and love of the Maker and Doer of this, tell me who has best delivered this His message unto men!

## RAIN CLOUDS.

The clouds which I wish to consider as characteristic of the *lower, or rainy region*, differ not so much in their real nature from those of the central and uppermost regions, as in appearance, owing to their greater nearness. For the central clouds, and perhaps even the high cirri, deposit moisture, if not distinctly rain, as is sufficiently proved by the existence of snow on the highest peaks of the Himaleh; and when, on any such mountains, we are brought into close contact with the central clouds, we find them little differing from the ordinary rain

cloud of the plains, except by being slightly less dense and dark. But the apparent differences, dependent on proximity, are most marked and important.

In the first place, the clouds of the central region have, as has been before observed, pure and aerial grays for their dark sides, owing to their necessary distance from the observer; and as this distance permits a multitude of local phenomena capable of influencing color, such as accidental sunbeams, refractions, transparencies, or local mists and showers, to be collected into a space apparently small, the colors of these clouds are always changeful and palpitating; and whatever degree of gray or of gloom may be mixed with them is invariably pure and aerial. But the nearness of the rain-cloud rendering it impossible for a number of phenomena to be at once visible, makes its hue of gray monotonous, and (by losing the blue of distance) warm and brown compared to that of the upper clouds. This is especially remarkable on any part of it which may happen to be illumined, which is of a brown, bricky, ochreous tone, never bright, always coming in dark outline on the lights of the central clouds. But it is seldom that this takes place, and when it does, never over large spaces, little being usually seen of the rain-cloud but its under and dark side. This, when the cloud above is dense, becomes of an inky and cold gray, and sulphureous and lurid if there be thunder in the air.

To the region of the rain-cloud belong also all those phenomena of drifted smoke, heat-haze, local mists in the morning or evening; in valleys, or over water, mirage, white steaming vapor rising in evaporation from moist and open surfaces, and every thing which visibly affects the condition of the atmosphere without actually assuming the form of cloud. These phenomena are as perpetual in all countries as they are beautiful, and afford by far the most effective and valuable means

which the painter possesses, for modification of the forms of fixed objects. The upper clouds are distinct and comparatively opaque, they do not modify, but conceal; but through the rain-cloud, and its accessory phenomena, all that is beautiful may be made manifest, and all that is hurtful concealed; what is paltry may be made to look vast, and what is ponderous, aerial; mystery may be obtained without obscurity, and decoration without disguise. And, accordingly, nature herself uses it constantly, as one of her chief means of most perfect effect; not in one country, nor another, but everywhere—everywhere, at least, where there is anything worth calling landscape. I cannot answer for the desert of the Sahara, but I know that there can be no greater mistake, than supposing that delicate and variable effects of mist and rain-cloud are peculiar to northern climates. I have never seen in any place or country effects of mist more perfect than in the Campagna of Rome, and among the hills of Sorrento. We never can see the azure so intense as when the greater part of this vapor has just fallen in rain. Then, and then only, pure blue sky becomes visible in the first openings, distinguished especially by the manner in which the clouds melt into it; their edges passing off in faint white threads and fringes, through which the blue shines more and more intensely, till the last trace of vapor is lost in its perfect color. It is only the upper white clouds, however, which do this, or the last fragments of rain-clouds, becoming white as they disappear, so that the blue is never *corrupted* by the cloud, but only paled and broken with pure white, the purest white which the sky ever shows. Thus we have a melting and palpitating color, never the same for two inches together, deepening and broadening here and there into intensity of perfect azure, then drifted and dying away through every tone of pure pale sky, into the snow white of the filmy cloud. Over this roll the

determined edges of the rain-clouds, throwing it all far back, as a retired scene, into the upper sky.

Not long ago I was slowly descending the first turn after you leave Albano. It had been wild weather when I left Rome, and all across the Campagna the clouds were sweeping in sulphurous blue, with a clap of thunder or two, and breaking gleams of sun along the Claudian aqueduct, lighting up the infinity of its arches like the bridge of chaos. But as I climbed the long slope of the Alban mount, the storm swept finally to the north, and the noble outlines of the domes of Albano, and graceful darkness of its ilex groves, rose against pure streaks of alternate blue and amber; the upper sky gradually flashing through the last fragments of rain-cloud in deep palpitating azure, half ether and half dew. The noon-day sun came slanting down the rocky slopes of La Riccia, and its masses of entangled and tall foliage, whose autumnal tints were mixed with the wet verdure of a thousand evergreens, were penetrated with it as with rain. I cannot call it color, it was conflagration; purple, and crimson, and scarlet, like the curtains of God's tabernacle. The rejoicing trees sank into the valley in showers of light, every separate leaf quivering with buoyant and burning life; each, as it turned to reflect or to transmit the sunbeam, first a torch and then an emerald. Far up into the recesses of the valley, the green vistas, arched like the hollows of mighty waves of some crystalline sea, with the arbutus flowers clasped along their flanks for foam, and silver flakes of orange-flower-like spray tossed into the air, around them, breaking over the grey walls of rock, into a thousand separate stars, fading and kindling alternately as the weak wind lifted and let them fall. Every glade of grass burned like the golden floor of heaven, opening in sudden gleams as the foliage broke and closed above it, as sheet lightning opens in a cloud at sunset. The motionless masses of dark rock—

dark, though flushed with scarlet lichen—casting their quiet shadows across its restless radiance, the fountain underneath them filling its marble hollow with blue mist and fitful sound, and over all the multitudinous bars of umber and rose, the sacred clouds that have no darkness, and only exist to illumine, were seen in fathomless intervals between the solemn and orbed repose of the stone pines, passing to lose themselves in the last white blinding lustre of the measureless line, where the Campagna melted into the blaze of the sea.

The woods and waters which were peopled by the Greek with typical life were not different from those which now wave and murmur by the ruins of his shrines. With their visible and actual forms was his imagination filled, and the beauty of its incarnate creatures can only be understood among the pure realities which originally modelled their conception. If *divinity* be stamped upon the features, or apparent in the form of the spiritual creature, the mind will not be shocked by its appearing to ride upon the whirlwind, and trample on the storm; but if *mortality*, no violation of the characters of earth will forge one single link to bind it to heaven.

Though Nature is constantly beautiful, she does not exhibit her highest powers of beauty constantly, for then they would satiate us and pall upon the senses. It is necessary to their appreciation that they should be rarely shown. Her finest touches are things which must be watched for; her most perfect passages of beauty are the most evanescent. She is constantly doing something beautiful for us, but it is something which she has not done before and will not do again;—some exhibition of her general powers in particular circumstances, which if we do not catch at the instant it is passing, will not

be repeated for us. Now, they are these evanescent passages of perfected beauty, these perpetually varied examples of utmost power, which the artist ought to seek for and arrest.

Perhaps there is no more impressive scene on earth than the solitary extent of the Campagna of Rome, under evening light. Let the reader imagine himself, for a moment, withdrawn from the sounds and motions of the living world, and sent forth alone into this wild and wasted plain. The earth yields and crumbles beneath his foot, tread he never so lightly, for its substance is white, hollow, and carious, like the dusty wreck of the bones of men. The long, knotted grass waves and tosses feebly in the evening wind, and the shadows of its motion shake feverishly along the banks of ruin that lift themselves to the sunlight. Hillocks of mouldering earth heave around him, as if the dead beneath were struggling in their sleep; scattered blocks of black stone, four square, remnants of mighty edifices, not one left upon another, lie upon them, to keep them down. A dull purple, poisonous haze stretches level along the desert, veiling its spectral wrecks of massy ruins, on whose rents the red light rests, like dying fire on defiled altars. The blue ridge of the Alban Mount, lifts itself against a solemn space of green, clear, quiet sky. Watchtowers of dark clouds stand steadfastly along the promontories of the Apennines. From the plain to the mountains, the shattered aqueducts, pier beyond pier, melt into the darkness, like shadowy and countless troops of funeral mourners passing from a nation's grave.

## WATER.

Of all inorganic substances, acting in their own proper nature, and without assistance or combination, water is the most wonderful. If we think of it as the source of all the changefulness and beauty which we have seen in clouds; then as the instrument by which the earth we have contemplated was modelled into symmetry, and its crags chiselled into grace; then as, in the form of snow, it robes the mountains it has made, with that transcendent light which we could not have conceived if we had not seen; then as it exists in the foam of the torrent—in the iris which spans it, in the morning mist which rises from it, in the deep crystalline pools which mirror its hanging shore, in the broad lake and glancing river; finally, in that which is to all human minds the best emblem of unwearied, unconquerable power, the wild, various, fantastic, tameless unity of the sea; what shall we compare to this mighty, this universal element, for glory and for beauty? or how shall we follow its eternal changefulness of feeling? It is like trying to paint a soul.

Few people, comparatively, have ever seen the effect on the sea of a powerful gale continued without intermission for three or four days and nights, and to those who have not I believe it must be unimaginable, not from the mere force or size of surge, but from the complete annihilation of the limit between sea and air. The water from its prolonged agitation is beaten, not into mere creaming foam, but into masses of accumulated yeast,* which hangs in ropes and wreaths from wave to wave,

* The "yesty waves" of Shakspeare have made the likeness familiar, and probably most readers take the expression as merely equivalent to "foamy;" but Shakspeare knew better. Sea-foam does not, under ordinary circumstances, last a moment after it is formed, but disappears, as above described, in

and where one curls over to break, form a festoon like a drapery, from its edge; these are taken up by the wind, not in dissipating dust, but bodily, in writhing, hanging, coiling masses, which make the air white and thick as with snow, only the flakes are a foot or two long each; the surges themselves are full of foam in their very bodies, underneath, making them white all through, as the water is under a great cataract; and their masses, being thus half water and half air, are torn to pieces by the wind whenever they rise, and carried away in roaring smoke, which chokes and strangles like actual water. Add to this, that when the air has been exhausted of its moisture by long rain, the spray of the sea is caught by it and covers its surface not merely with the smoke of finely divided water, but with boiling mist; imagine also the low rain-clouds brought down to the very level of the sea, as I

a mere white film. But the foam of a prolonged tempest is altogether different; it is "whipped" foam,—thick, permanent, and, in a foul or discolored sea, very ugly, especially in the way it hangs about the tops of the waves, and gathers into clotted concretions before the driving wind. The sea looks truly working or fermenting. The following passage from Fennimore Cooper is an interesting confirmation of the rest of the above description, which may be depended upon as entirely free from exaggeration:—"For the first time I now witnessed a tempest at sea. Gales, and pretty hard ones, I had often seen, but the force of the wind on this occasion as much exceeded that in ordinary gales of wind, as the force of these had exceeded that of a whole-sail breeze. The seas seemed crushed; the pressure of the swooping atmosphere, as the currents of the air went howling over the surface of the ocean, fairly preventing them from rising; or where a mound of water did appear, it was scooped up and borne off in spray, as the axe dubs inequalities from the log. When the day returned, a species of lurid, sombre light was diffused over the watery waste, though nothing was visible but the ocean and the ship. Even the sea-birds seemed to have taken refuge in the caverns of the adjacent coast, none reappearing with the dawn. The air was full of spray, and it was with difficulty that the eye could penetrate as far into the humid atmosphere as half a mile." Half a mile is an over-estimate in coast.

have often seen them, whirling and flying in rags and frag ments from wave to wave; and finally, conceive the surges themselves in their utmost pitch of power, velocity, vastness, and madness, lifting themselves in precipices and peaks, furrowed with their whirl of ascent, through all this chaos, and you will understand that there is indeed no distinction left between the sea and air; that no object, nor horizon, nor any landmark or natural evidence of position is left; that the heaven is all spray, and the ocean all cloud, and that you can see no farther in any direction than you could see through a cataract. Few people have had the opportunity of seeing the sea at such a time, and when they have, cannot face it. To hold by a mast or a rock, and watch it, is a prolonged endurance of drowning which few people have courage to go through. To those who have, it is one of the noblest lessons of nature.

All rivers, small or large, agree in one character; they like to lean a little on one side; they cannot bear to have their channels deepest in the middle, but will always, if they can, have one bank to sun themselves upon, and another to get cool under; one shingly shore to play over, where they may be shallow, and foolish, and childlike; and another steep shore, under which they can pause and purify themselves, and get their strength of waves fully together for due occasions. Rivers in this way are just like wise men, who keep one side of their life for play, and another for work; and can be brilliant, and chattering, and transparent when they are at ease, and yet take deep counsel on the other side when they set themselves to the main purpose. And rivers are just in this divided, also, like wicked and good men; the good rivers have serviceable deep places all along their banks that ships can sail in, but the wicked rivers go scoopingly, irregularly, under their banks until they get full of strangling eddies, which no

boat can row over without being twisted against the rocks, and pools like wells which no one can get out of but the water-kelpie that lives at the bottom; but, wicked or good, the rivers all agree in having two sides.

Stand for half an hour beside the fall of Schaffhausen, on the north side where the rapids are long, and watch how the vault of water first bends, unbroken, in pure, polished velocity, over the arching rocks at the brow of the cataract, covering them with a dome of crystal twenty feet thick—so swift that its motion is unseen except when a foam globe from above darts over it like a falling star; and how the trees are lighted above it under their leaves, at the instant that it breaks into foam; and how all the hollows of that foam burn with green fire like so much shattering chrysoprase; and how, ever and anon, startling you with its white flash, a jet of spray leaps hissing out of the fall like a rocket, bursting in the wind and driven away in dust, filling the air with light; and how, through the curdling wreaths of the restless, crashing abyss below, the blue of the water, paled by the foam in its body, showers purer than the sky through white rain-cloud; while the shuddering iris stoops in tremulous stillness over all, fading and flushing alternately through the choking spray and shattered sunshine, hiding itself at last among the thick golden leaves which toss to and fro in sympathy with the wild water; their dripping masses lifted at intervals, like sheaves of loaded corn, by some stronger gush from the cataract, and bowed again upon the mossy rocks as its roar dies away; the dew gushing from their thick branches through drooping clusters of emerald herbage, and sparkling in white threads along the dark rocks of the shore, feeding the lichens which chase and checker them with purple and silver. There is hardly a road-side pond or pool which has not as much

landscape *in* it as above it. It is not the brown, muddy, dull thing we suppose it to be; it has a heart like ourselves, and in the bottom of that there are the boughs of the tall trees, and the blades of the shaking grass, and all manner of hues, of variable, pleasant light out of the sky; nay, the ugly gutter, that stagnates over the drain bars, in the heart of the foul city, is not altogether base; down in that, if you will look deep enough, you may see the dark, serious blue of far-off sky, and the passing of pure clouds. It is at your own will that you see in that despised stream, either the refuse of the street, or the image of the sky—so it is with almost all other things that we unkindly despise.

When water, not in very great body, runs in a rocky bed much interrupted by hollows, so that it can rest every now and then in a pool as it goes along, it does not acquire a continuous velocity of motion. It pauses after every leap, and curdles about, and rests a little, and then goes on again; and if in this comparatively tranquil and rational state of mind it meets with an obstacle, as a rock or stone, it parts on each side of it with a little bubbling foam, and goes round; if it come to a step in its bed, it leaps it lightly, and then after a little plashing at the bottom, stops again to take breath. But if its bed be on a continuous slope, not much interrupted by hollows, so that it cannot rest, or if its own mass be so increased by flood that its usual resting-places are not sufficient for it, but that it is perpetually pushed out of them by the following current, before it has come to tranquillise itself, it of course gains velocity with every yard that it runs; the impetus got at one leap is carried to the credit of the next, until the whole stream becomes one mass of unchecked, accelerating motion. Now when water in this state comes to an obstacle, it does not part at it, but clears it like a race-horse; and when it comes to a hollow, it does not fill it up and run

out leisurely at the other side, but it rushes down into it and comes up again on the other side, as a ship into the hollow of the sea. Hence the whole appearance of the bed of the stream is changed, and all the lines of the water altered in their nature. The quiet stream is a succession of leaps and pools; the leaps are light and springy, and parabolic, and make a great deal of splashing when they tumble into the pool, then we have a space of quiet curdling water, and another similar leap below. But the stream when it has gained an impetus takes the shape of its bed, never stops, is equally deep and equally swift everywhere, goes down into every hollow, not with a leap, but with a swing, not foaming, nor splashing, but in the bending line of a strong sea-wave, and comes up again on the other side, over rock and ridge, with the ease of a bounding leopard; if it meet a rock three or four feet above the level of its bed, it will neither part nor foam, nor express any concern about the matter, but clear it in a smooth dome of water, without apparent exertion, coming down again as smoothly on the other side; the whole surface of the surge being drawn into parallel lines by its extreme velocity, but foamless, except in places where the form of the bed opposes itself at some direct angle to such a line of fall, and causes a breaker; so that the whole river has the appearance of a deep and raging sea, with this only difference, that the torrent-waves always break backwards, and sea-waves forwards. Thus, then, in the water which has gained an impetus, we have the most exquisite arrangements of curved lines, perpetually changing from convex to concave, and *vice versâ*, following every swell and hollow of the bed with their modulating grace, and all in unison of motion, presenting perhaps the most beautiful series of inorganic forms which nature can possibly produce; for the sea runs too much into similar and concave curves with sharp edges, but every motion of the

torrent is united, and all its curves are modifications of beau tiful line.

Every fountain and river from the inch-deep streamlet that crosses the village lane in trembling clearness, to the massy and silent march of the everlasting multitude of waters in Amazon or Ganges, owe their play, and purity, and power, to the ordained elevations of the earth. Gentle or steep, extended or abrupt, some determined slope of the earth's surface is of course necessary before any wave can so much as overtake one sedge in its pilgrimage; and how seldom do we enough consider, as we walk beside the margins of our pleasant brooks, how beautiful and wonderful is that ordinance, of which every blade of grass that waves in their clear water is a perpetual sign; that the dew and rain fallen on the face of the earth shall find no resting-place; shall find, on the contrary, fixed channels traced for them, from the ravines of the central crests down which they roar in sudden ranks of foam, to the dark hollows beneath the banks of lowland pasture, round which they must circle slowly among the stems and beneath the leaves of the lilies; paths prepared for them, by which, at some appointed rate of journey, they must evermore descend, sometimes slow and sometimes swift, but never pausing; the daily portion of the earth they have to glide over marked for them at each successive sunrise, the place which has known them knowing them no more, and the gateways of guarding mountains opened for them in cleft and chasm, none letting them in their pilgrimage; and, from far off, the great heart of the sea calling them to itself! Deep calleth unto deep. I know not which of the two is the more wonderful—that calm, gradated, invisible slope of the champaign land, which gives motion to the stream; or that passage cloven for it through the ranks of hill, which, necessary for the health of the land

immediately around them, would yet, unless so supernaturally divided, have fatally intercepted the flow of the waters from far-off countries. When did the great spirit of the river first knock at those adamantine gates? When did the porter open to it, and cast his keys away for ever, lapped in whirling sand? I am not satisfied—no one should be satisfied—with that vague answer,—the river cut its way. Not so. The river *found* its way.

It was a maxim of Raffaelle's that the artist's object was to make things not as Nature makes them, but as she *would* make them; as she ever tries to make them, but never succeeds, though her aim may be deduced from a comparison of her effects; just as if a number of archers had aimed unsuccessfully at a mark upon a wall, and this mark were then removed, we could by the examination of their arrow-marks point out the probable position of the spot aimed at, with a certainty of being nearer to it than any of their shots.

We have most of us heard of original sin, and may perhaps, in our modest moments, conjecture that we are not quite what God, or Nature, would have us to be. Raffaelle *had* something to mend in *humanity:* I should like to have seen him mending a daisy, or a pease-blossom, or a moth, or a mustard-seed, or any other of God's slightest works! If he had accomplished that, one might have found for him more respectable employment, to set the stars in better order, perhaps (they seem grievously scattered as they are, and to be of all manner of shapes and sizes, except the *ideal* shape, and the proper size); or, to give us a *corrected view of the ocean*, that at least seems a very irregular and improveable thing: the very fishermen do not know this day how far it will reach, driven up before the west wind. Perhaps some one else does, but that is not our business. Let us go down and stand on

the beach by the sea—the great irregular sea, and count whether the thunder of it is not out of time—one,—two:—here comes a well-formed wave at last, trembling a little at the top, but on the whole, orderly. So! Crash among the shingle, and up as far as this grey pebble! Now, stand by and watch. Another:—Ah, careless wave! why couldn't you have kept your crest on? It is all gone away into spray, striking up against the cliffs there—I thought as much—missed the mark by a couple of feet! Another:—How now, impatient one! couldn't you have waited till your friend's reflux was done with, instead of rolling yourself up with it in that unseemly manner? You go for nothing. A fourth, and a goodly one at last! What think we of yonder slow rise, and crystalline hollow, without a flaw? Steady, good wave! not so fast! not so fast! Where are you coming to? This is too bad; two yards over the mark, and ever so much of you in our face besides; and a wave which we had some hope of, behind there, broken all to pieces out at sea, and laying a great white tablecloth of foam all the way to the shore, as if the marine gods were to dine off it! Alas, for these unhappy "arrow shots" of Nature! She will never hit her mark with those unruly waves of hers, nor get one of them into the ideal shape, if we wait for a thousand years.

## MOUNTAINS.

"And God said, Let the waters which are under the heaven be gathered unto one place, and let the dry land appear." We do not, perhaps, often enough consider the deep significance of this sentence. We are too apt to receive it as the description of an event vaster only in its extent, not in its

nature, than the compelling the Red Sea to draw back that Israel might pass by. We imagine the Deity in like manner rolling the waves of the greater ocean together on a heap, and setting bars and doors to them eternally.

But there is a far deeper meaning than this in the solemn words of Genesis, and in the correspondent verse of the Psalm, "His hands prepared the dry land." Up to that moment the earth had been void, for it had been *without form*. The command that the waters should be gathered was the command that the earth should be *sculptured*. The sea was not driven to his place in sudden restrained rebellion, but withdrawn to his place in perfect and patient obedience. The dry land appeared, not in level sands forsaken by the surges, which those surges might again claim for their own; but in range beyond range of swelling hill and iron rock, for ever to claim kindred with the firmament, and be companioned by the clouds of heaven.

What space of time was in reality occupied by the "day" of Genesis, is not, at present, of any importance for us to consider. By what furnaces of fire the adamant was melted, and by what wheels of earthquake it was torn, and by what teeth of glacier and weight of sea-waves it was engraven and finished into its perfect form, we may, perhaps, hereafter endeavor to conjecture; but here, as in few words the work is summed up by the historian, so in few broad thoughts it should be comprehended by us; and as we read the mighty sentence, "Let the dry land appear," we should try to follow the finger of God, as it engraved upon the stone tables of the earth the letters and the law of its everlasting form; as gulf by gulf the channels of the deep were ploughed, and cape by cape the lines were traced, with Divine foreknowledge of the shores that were to limit the nations; and chain by chain the mountain walls were lengthened forth, and their foun

dations fastened for ever; and the compass was set upon the face of the deep, and the fields and the highest parts of the dust of the world were made; and the right hand of Christ first strewed the snow on the Lebanon, and smoothed the slopes of Calvary.

It is not always needful, in many respects it is not possible, to conjecture the manner or the time in which this work was done; but it is deeply necessary for all men to consider the magnificence of the accomplished purpose, and the depth of the wisdom and love which are manifested in the ordinances of the hills.

For, observe, in order to bring the world into the form which it now bears, it was not mere sculpture that was needed; the mountains could not stand for a day unless they were formed of materials altogether different from those which constitute the lower hills and the surfaces of the valleys. A harder substance had to be prepared for every mountain chain, yet not so hard but that it might be capable of crumbling down into earth fit to nourish the Alpine forest and the Alpine flower; not so hard but that, in the midst of the utmost majesty of its enthroned strength, there should be seen on it the seal of death, and the writing of the same sentence that had gone forth against the human frame, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." And with this perishable substance the most majestic forms were to be framed that were consistent with the safety of man; and the peak was to be lifted, and the cliff rent, as high and as steeply as possible, in order yet to permit the shepherd to feed his flocks upon the slope, and the cottage to nestle beneath their shadow.

And observe, two distinct ends were to be accomplished in the doing this. It was, indeed, absolutely necessary that such eminences should be created, in order to fit the earth in any wise for human habitation; for without mountains the air

could not be purified, nor the flowing of the rivers sustained, and the earth must have become for the most part desert plain, or stagnant marsh. But the feeding of the rivers and the purifying of the winds are the least of the services appointed to the hills. To fill the thirst of the human heart for the beauty of God's working,—to startle its lethargy with the deep and pure agitation of astonishment,—are their higher missions. They are as a great and noble architecture; first giving shelter, comfort, and rest; and covered also with mighty sculpture and painted legend. It is impossible to examine in their connected system the features of even the most ordinary mountain scenery, without concluding that it has been prepared in order to unite as far as possible, and in the closest compass, every means of delighting and sanctifying the heart of man. "As far as *possible;*" that is, as far as is consistent with the fulfilment of the sentence of condemnation on the whole earth. Death must be upon the hills; and the cruelty of the tempest smite them, and the briar and thorn spring up upon them; but they so smite, as to bring their rocks into the fairest forms; and so spring, as to make the very desert blossom as the rose. Even among our own hills of Scotland and Cumberland, though often too barren to be perfectly beautiful, and always too low to be perfectly sublime, it is strange how many deep sources of delight are gathered into the compass of their glens and vales; and how, down to the most secret cluster of their far-away flowers, and the idlest leap of their straying streamlets, the whole heart of Nature seems thirsting to give, and still to give, shedding forth her everlasting beneficence with a profusion so patient, so passionate, that our utmost observance and thankfulness are but, at least, neglect of her nobleness, and apathy to her love. But among the true mountains of the greater orders the Divine purpose of appeal at once to all the faculties of the human

spirit becomes still more manifest. Inferior hills ordinarily interrupt, in some degree, the richness of the valleys at their feet; the grey downs of southern England, and treeless coteaux of central France, and grey swells of Scottish moor, whatever peculiar charm they may possess in themselves, are at least destitute of those which belong to the woods and fields of the lowlands. But the great mountains *lift* the lowlands *on their sides.* Let the reader imagine, first, the appearance of the most varied plain of some richly cultivated country; let him imagine it dark with graceful woods, and soft with deepest pastures; let him fill the space of it, to the utmost horizon, with innumerable and changeful incidents of scenery and life; leading pleasant streamlets through its meadows, strewing clusters of cottages beside their banks, tracing sweet footpaths through its avenues, and animating its fields with happy flocks, and slow wandering spots of cattle; and when he has wearied himself with endless imagining, and left no space without some loveliness of its own, let him conceive all this great plain, with its infinite treasures of natural beauty and happy human life, gathered up in God's hand from one end of the horizon to the other, like a woven garment; and shaken into deep falling folds, as the robes droop from a king's shoulders; all its bright rivers leaping into cataracts along the hollows of its fall, and all its forests rearing themselves aslant against its slopes, as a rider rears himself back when his horse plunges; and all its villages nestling themselves into the new windings of its glens; and all its pastures thrown into steep waves of greensward, dashed with dew along the edges of their folds, and sweeping down into endless slopes, with a cloud here and there lying quietly, half on the grass, half in the air; and he will have as yet, in all this lifted world, only the foundation of one of the great Alps.

They seem to have been built for the human race, as at

once their schools and cathedrals; full of treasures of illuminated manuscript for the scholar, kindly in simple lessons to the worker, quiet in pale cloisters for the thinker, glorious in holiness for the worshipper. And of these great cathedrals of the earth, with their gates of rock, pavements of cloud, choirs of stream and stone, altars of snow, and vaults of purple traversed by the continual stars,—of these, as we have seen, it was written, nor long ago, by one of the best of the poor human race for whom it was built, wondering in himself for whom their Creator *could* have made them, and thinking to have entirely discerned the Divine intent in them—"They are inhabited by the Beasts."

Mountains are, to the rest of the body of the earth, what violent muscular action is to the body of man. The muscles and tendons of its anatomy are, in the mountain, brought out with fierce and convulsive energy, full of expression, passion, and strength; the plains and the lower hills are the repose and the effortless motion of the frame, when its muscles lie dormant and concealed beneath the lines of its beauty, yet ruling those lines in their every undulation. This, then, is the first grand principle of the truth of the earth. The spirit of the hills is action; that of the lowlands, repose; and between these there is to be found every variety of motion and of rest; from the inactive plain, sleeping like the firmament, with cities for stars, to the fiery peaks, which, with heaving bosoms and exulting limbs, with the clouds drifting like hair from their bright foreheads, lift up their Titan hands to Heaven, saying, "I live forever!"

But there is this difference between the action of the earth, and that of a living creature, that while the exerted limb marks its bones and tendons through the flesh, the excited earth casts off the flesh altogether, and its bones come out from beneath. Mountains are the bones of the earth, their

highest peaks are invariably those parts of its anatomy which in the plains lie buried under five and twenty thousand feet of solid thickness of superincumbent soil, and which spring up in the mountain ranges in vast pyramids or wedges, flinging their garment of earth away from them on each side. The masses of the lower hills are laid over and against their sides, like the masses of lateral masonry against the skeleton arch of an unfinished bridge, except that they slope up to and lean against the central ridge: and, finally, upon the slopes of these lower hills are strewed the level beds of sprinkled gravel, sand, and clay, which form the extent of the champaign. Here then is another grand principle of the truth of earth, that the mountains must come from under all, and be the support of all; and that everything else must be laid in their arms, heap above heap, the plains being the uppermost.

Snow is modified by the under forms of the hill in some sort, as dress is by the anatomy of the human frame. And as no dress can be well laid on without conceiving the body beneath, so no Alp can be drawn unless its under form is conceived first, and its snow laid on afterwards.

Every high Alp has as much snow upon it as it can hold or carry. It is not, observe, a mere coating of snow of given depth throughout, but it is snow loaded on until the rocks can hold no more. The surplus does not fall in the winter, because, fastened by continual frost, the quantity of snow which an Alp can carry is greater than each single winter can bestow; it falls in the first mild days of spring in enormous avalanches. Afterwards the melting continues, gradually removing from all the steep rocks the small quantity of snow which was all they could hold, and leaving them black and bare among the accumulated fields of unknown depth, which occupy the capacious valleys and less inclined superficies of the mountain.

Hence it follows that the deepest snow does not take nor

indicate the actual forms of the rocks on which it lies, but it hangs from peak to peak in unbroken and sweeping festoons, or covers whole groups of peaks, which afford it sufficient hold, with vast and unbroken domes: these festoons and domes being guided in their curves, and modified in size, by the violence and prevalent direction of the winter winds.

It fell within the purpose of the Great Builder to give, in the highest peaks of mountains, examples of form more strange and majestic than any which could be obtained by structures so beneficently adapted to the welfare of the human race. And the admission of other modes of elevation, more terrific and less secure, takes place exactly in proportion to the increasing presence of such conditions in the locality as shall render it on other grounds unlikely to be inhabited or incapable of being so. Where the soil is rich and the climate soft, the hills are low and safe; as the ground becomes poorer and the air keener, they rise into forms of more peril and pride; and their utmost terror is shown only where their fragments fall on trackless ice, and the thunder of their ruin can be heard but by the ibex and the eagle. The work of the Great Spirit of nature is as deep and unapproachable in the lowest as in the noblest objects, the Divine mind is as visible in its full energy of operation on every lowly bank and mouldering stone, as in the lifting of the pillars of heaven, and settling the foundation of the earth; and to the rightly perceiving mind, there is the same infinity, the same majesty, the same power, the same unity, and the same perfection, manifest in the casting of the clay as in the scattering of the cloud, in the mouldering of the dust as in the kindling of the day-star.

It would be as absurd to think it an evil that all the world is not fit for us to inhabit, as to think it an evil that the globe is no larger than it is. As much as we shall ever need is evidently assigned to us for our dwelling-place; the rest,

covered with rolling waves or drifting sands, fretted with ice or crested with fire, is set before us for contemplation in an uninhabitable magnificence; and that part which we are enabled to inhabit owes its fitness for human life chiefly to its mountain ranges, which, throwing the superfluous rain off as it falls, collect it in streams or lakes, and guide it into given places.

In some sense, a person who has never seen the rose-color of the rays of dawn crossing a blue mountain twelve or fifteen miles away, can hardly be said to know what *tenderness* in color means at all; *bright* tenderness he may, indeed, see in the sky or in a flower, but this grave tenderness of the far-away hill-purples he cannot conceive.

Together with this great source of pre-eminence in *mass* of color, we have to estimate the influence of the finished inlaying and enamel-work of the color-jewellery on every stone; and that of the continual variety in species of flower; most of the mountain flowers being, besides, separately lovelier than the lowland ones. The wood hyacinth and wild rose are, indeed, the only *supreme* flowers that the lowlands can generally show; and the wild rose is also a mountaineer, and more fragrant in the hills, while the wood hyacinth, or grape hyacinth, at its best cannot match even the dark bell-gentian, leaving the light-blue star-gentian in its uncontested queenliness, and the Alpine rose and Highland heather wholly without similitude. The violet, lily of the valley, crocus, and wood anemone are, I suppose, claimable partly by the plains as well as the hills; but the large orange lily and narcissus I have never seen but on hill pastures, and the exquisite oxalis is pre-eminently a mountaineer.*

* The Savoyard's name for its flower, "Pain du Bon Dieu," is very beautiful; from, I believe, the supposed resemblance of its white and scattered blossom to the fallen manna.

There are three great offices which mountain ranges are appointed to fulfil, in order to preserve the health and increase the happiness of mankind.

1. The mountains and hills give motion to water, so that men can build their cities in the midst of fields which will always be fertile, and establish the lines of their commerce on streams which will not fail.

2. Mountains maintain a constant change in the currents of the air. Mountains divide the earth not only into districts, but into climates, and cause perpetual currents of air to traverse their passes, and ascend or descend their ravines, altering both the temperature and nature of the air in a thousand different ways, moistening it with the spray of their waterfalls, sucking it down and beating it hither and thither in the pools of their torrents, closing it within clefts and caves, where the sunbeams never reach, till it is as cold as November mists, then sending it forth again to breathe softly across the slopes of velvet fields, or to be scorched among sunburnt shales and shapeless crags, then drawing it back in moaning swirls through clefts of ice, and up into dewy wreaths above the snow-fields; then piercing it with strange electric darts and flashes of mountain fire, and tossing it high in fantastic storm-cloud as the dried grass is tossed by the mower, only suffering it to depart at last, when chastened and pure, to refresh the faded air of the far-off plains.

3. The third great use of mountains is to cause perpetual change in the *soils* of the earth. Without such provisions the ground under cultivation would in a series of years become exhausted and require to be upturned laboriously by the hand of man. But the elevations of the earth's surface provide for it a perpetual renovation. The higher mountains suffer their summits to be broken into fragments and to be cast down in sheets of massy rock, full, as we shall see presently,

of every substance necessary for the nourishment of plants these fallen fragments are again broken by frost, and ground by torrents, into various conditions of sand and clay—materials which are distributed perpetually by the streams farther and farther from the mountain's base. Every shower which swells the rivulets enables their waters to carry certain portions of earth into new positions, and exposes new banks of ground to be mined in their turn. That turbid foaming of the angry water,—that tearing down of bank and rock along the flanks of its fury,—are no disturbances of the kind course of nature; they are beneficent operations of laws necessary to the existence of man and to the beauty of the earth. The process is continued more gently, but not less effectively, over all the surface of the lower undulating country; and each filtering thread of summer rain which trickles through the short turf of the uplands is bearing its own appointed burden of earth to be thrown down on some new natural garden in the dingles below.

And it is not, in reality, a degrading, but a true, large, and ennobling view of the mountain ranges of the world, if we compare them to heaps of fertile and fresh earth, laid up by a prudent gardener beside his garden beds, whence, at intervals, he casts on them some scattering of new and virgin ground. That which we so often lament as convulsion or destruction is nothing else than the momentary shaking off the dust from the spade. The winter floods, which inflict a temporary devastation, bear with them the elements of succeeding fertility; the fruitful field is covered with sand and shingle in momentary judgment, but in enduring mercy; and the great river, which chokes its mouth with marsh, and tosses terror along its shore, is but scattering the seeds of the harvests of futurity, and preparing the seats of unborn generations.

I have not spoken of the local and peculiar utilities of mountains: I do not count the benefit of the supply of sum-

mer streams from the moors of the higher ranges—of the various medicinal plants which are nested among their rocks, —of the delicate pasturage which they furnish for cattle,*— of the forests in which they bear timber for shipping—the stones they supply for building, or the ores of metal which they collect into spots open to discovery, and easy for working. All these benefits are of a secondary or a limited nature. But the three great functions which I have just described,— those of giving motion and change to water, air, and earth,— are indispensable to human existence; they are operations to be regarded with as full a depth of gratitude as the laws which bid the tree bear fruit, or the seed multiply itself in the earth. And thus those desolate and threatening ranges of dark mountain, which, in nearly all ages of the world, men have looked upon with aversion or with terror, and shrunk back from as if they were haunted by perpetual images of death, are, in reality, sources of life and happiness far fuller and more beneficent than all the bright fruitfulness of the plain. The valleys only feed; the mountains feed, and guard, and strengthen us. We take our idea of fearfulness and sublimity alternately from the mountains and the sea; but we associate them unjustly. The sea wave, with all its beneficence, is yet devouring and terrible, but the silent wave of the blue mountain is lifted towards heaven in a stillness of perpetual mercy; and the one surge, unfathomable in its darkness, the other, unshaken in its faithfulness, for ever bear the seal of their appointed symbol:

> "Thy *righteousness* is like the great mountains:
> Thy *judgments* are a great deep."

The higher mountains have their scenes of power and vastness, their blue precipices and cloud-like snows; why should

* The *highest* pasturages (at least so say the Savoyards) being always the best and richest.

they also have the best and fairest colors given to their foreground rocks, and overburden the human mind with wonder; while the less majestic scenery, tempting us to the observance of details for which amidst the higher mountains we have no admiration left, is yet, in the beauty of those very details, as inferior as it is in scale of magnitude?

I believe the answer must be, simply, that it is not good for man to live among what is most beautiful;—that he is a creature incapable of satisfaction by anything upon earth; and that to allow him habitually to possess, in any kind whatsoever, the utmost that earth can give, is the surest way to cast him into lassitude or discontent.

If the most exquisite orchestral music could be continued without a pause for a series of years, and children were brought up and educated in the room in which it were perpetually resounding, I believe their enjoyment of music, or understanding it, would be very small. And an accurately parallel effect seems to be produced upon the powers of contemplation, by the redundant and ceaseless loveliness of the high mountain districts. The faculties are paralysed by the abundance, and cease, as we before noticed of the imagination, to be capable of excitement, except by other subjects of interest than those which present themselves to the eye. So that it is, in reality, better for mankind that the forms of their common landscape should offer no violent stimulus to the emotions, —that the gentle upland, browned by the bending furrows of the plough, and the fresh sweep of the chalk down, and the narrow winding of the copse-clad dingle, should be more frequent scenes of human life than the Arcadias of cloud-capped mountain or luxuriant vale; and that, while humbler (though always infinite) sources of interest are given to each of us around the homes to which we are restrained for the greater part of our lives, these mightier and stranger glories should

become the objects of adventure,—at once the cynosures of the fancies of childhood, and themes of the happy memory, and the winter's tale of age.

Nor is it always that the inferiority is felt. For, so natural is it to the human heart to fix itself in hope rather than in present possession, and so subtle is the charm which the imagination casts over what is distant or denied, that there is often a more touching power in the scenes which contain far-away promise of something greater than themselves, than in those which exhaust the treasures and powers of Nature in an unconquerable and excellent glory, leaving nothing more to be by the fancy pictured or pursued.

I do not know that there is a district in the world more calculated to illustrate this power of the expectant imagination, than that which surrounds the city of Fribourg in Switzerland, extending from it towards Berne. It is of grey sandstone, considerably elevated, but presenting no object of striking interest to the passing traveller; so that, as it is generally seen in the course of a hasty journey from the Bernese Alps to those of Savoy, it is rarely regarded with any other sensation than that of weariness, all the more painful because accompanied with reaction from the high excitement caused by the splendor of the Bernese Oberland. The traveller, footsore, feverish, and satiated with glacier and precipice, lies back in the corner of the diligence, perceiving little more than that the road is winding and hilly, and the country through which it passes cultivated and tame. Let him, however, only do this tame country the justice of staying in it a few days, until his mind has recovered its tone, and taken one or two long walks through its fields, and he will have other thoughts of it. It is, as I said, an undulating district of grey sandstone, never attaining any considerable height, but having enough of the mountain spirit to throw itself into continual

succession of bold slope and dale; elevated, also, just far enough above the sea to render the pine a frequent forest tree along its irregular ridges. Through this elevated tract the river cuts its way in a ravine some five or six hundred feet in depth, which winds for leagues between the gentle hills, unthought of, until its edge is approached; and then suddenly, through the boughs of the firs, the eye perceives, beneath, the green and gliding stream, and the broad walls of sandstone cliff that form its banks, hollowed out where the river leans against them, at its turns, into perilous overhanging, and, on the other shore, at the same spots, leaving little breadths of meadow between them and the water, half-overgrown with thicket, deserted in their sweetness, inaccessible from above, and rarely visited by any curious wanderers along the hardly traceable footpath which struggles for existence beneath the rocks. And there the river ripples, and eddies, and murmurs in an utter solitude. It is passing through the midst of a thickly peopled country; but never was a stream so lonely. The feeblest and most far-away torrent among the high hills has its companions: the goats browse beside it; and the traveller drinks from it, and passes over it with his staff; and the peasant traces a new channel for it down to his mill-wheel. But this stream has no companions: it flows on in an infinite seclusion, not secret or threatening, but a quietness of sweet daylight and open air,—a broad space of tender and deep desolateness, drooped into repose out of the midst of human labor and life; the waves plashing lowly, with none to hear them; and the wild birds building in the boughs, with none to fray them away; and the soft fragrant herbs rising, and breathing, and fading, with no hand to gather them;—and yet all bright and bare to the clouds above, and to the fresh fall of the passing sunshine and pure rain.

But above the brows of those scarped cliffs, all is in an

instant changed. A few steps only beyond the firs that stretch their branches, angular, and wild, and white, like forks of lightning, into the air of the ravine, and we are in an arable country of the most perfect richness; the swathes of its corn glowing and burning from field to field; its pretty hamlets all vivid with fruitful orchards and flowery gardens, and goodly with steep-roofed storehouse and barn; its well-kept, hard, park-like roads rising and falling from hillside to hillside, or disappearing among brown banks of moss, and thickets of the wild raspberry and rose; or gleaming through lines of tall trees, half glade, half avenue, where the gate opens, or the gateless path turns trustedly aside, unhindered, into the garden of some statelier house, surrounded in rural pride with its golden hives, and carved granaries, and irregular domain of latticed and espaliered cottages, gladdening to look upon in their homeliness—delicate, yet, in some sort, rude; not like our English homes—trim, laborious, formal, irreproachable in comfort; but with a peculiar carelessness and largeness in all their detail, harmonizing with the outlawed loveliness of their country. For there is an untamed strength even in all that soft and habitable land. It is, indeed, gilded with corn and fragrant with deep grass, but it is not subdued to the plough or to the scythe. It gives at its own free will,—it seems to have nothing wrested from it nor conquered in it. It is not redeemed from desertness, but unrestrained in fruitfulness,—a generous land, bright with capricious plenty, and laughing from vale to vale in fitful fulness, kind and wild; nor this without some sterner element mingled in the heart of it. For along all its ridges stand the dark masses of innumerable pines, taking no part in its gladness, asserting themselves forever as fixed shadows, not to be pierced or banished, even in the intensest sunlight; fallen flakes and fragments of the night, stayed in their solemn squares in the midst of all the rosy

bendings of the orchard boughs, and the yellow effulgence of the harvest, and tracing themselves in black network and motionless fringes against the blanched blue of the horizon in its saintly clearness. And yet they do not sadden the landscape, but seem to have been set there chiefly to show how bright everything else is round them; and all the clouds look of purer silver, and all the air seems filled with a whiter and more living sunshine, where they are pierced by the sable points of the pines; and all the pastures look of more glowing green, where they run up between the purple trunks; and the sweet field footpaths skirt the edges of the forest for the sake of its shade, sloping up and down about the slippery roots, and losing themselves every now and then hopelessly among the violets, and ground ivy, and brown sheddings of the fibrous leaves; and, at last, plunging into some open aisle where the light through the distant stems shows that there is a chance of coming out again on the other side; and coming out, indeed, in a little while from the scented darkness, into the dazzling air and marvellous landscape, that stretches still farther and farther in new wilfulnesses of grove and garden, until, at last, the craggy mountains of the Simmenthal rise out of it, sharp into the rolling of the southern clouds.

Close beside the path by which travellers ascend the Montanvert from the valley of Chamouni, on the right hand, where it first begins to rise among the pines, there descends a small stream from the foot of the granite peak known to the guides as the Aiguille Charmoz. It is concealed from the traveller by a thicket of alder, and its murmur is hardly heard, for it is one of the weakest streams of the valley. But it is a constant stream; fed by a permanent though small glacier, and continuing to flow even to the close of the summer, when more copious torrents, depending on the melting of the lower snows, have left their beds "stony channels in the sun."

I suppose that my readers must be generally aware that glaciers are masses of ice in slow motion, at the rate of from ten to twenty inches a day, and that the stones which are caught between them and the rocks over which they pass, or which are embedded in the ice and dragged along by it over those rocks, are of course subjected to a crushing and grinding power altogether unparalleled by any other force in constant action. The dust to which these stones are reduced by the friction is carried down by the streams which flow from the melting glacier, so that the water which in the morning may be pure, owing what little strength it has chiefly to the rock springs, is in the afternoon not only increased in volume, but whitened with dissolved dust of granite, in proportion to the heat of the preceding hours of the day, and to the power and size of the glacier which feeds it.

The long drought which took place in the autumn of the year 1854, sealing every source of waters except these perpetual ones, left the torrent of which I am speaking, and such others, in a state peculiarly favorable to observance of their *least* action on the mountains from which they descend. They were entirely limited to their own ice fountains, and the quantity of powdered rock which they brought down was, of course, at its minimum, being nearly unmingled with any earth derived from the dissolution of softer soil, or vegetable mould, by rains.

At three in the afternoon, on a warm day in September, when the torrent had reached its average maximum strength for the day, I filled an ordinary Bordeaux wine-flask with the water where it was least turbid. From this quart of water I obtained twenty-four grains of sand and sediment, more or less fine. I cannot estimate the quantity of water in the stream; but the runlet of it at which I filled the flask was giving about two hundred bottles a minute, or rather more,

carrying down therefore about three quarters of a pound of powdered granite every minute. This would be forty-five pounds an hour; but allowing for the inferior power of the stream in the cooler periods of the day, and taking into consideration, on the other side, its increased power in rain, we may, I think, estimate its average hour's work at twenty-eight or thirty pounds, or a hundred-weight every four hours. By this insignificant runlet, therefore, some four inches wide and four inches deep, rather more than two tons of the substance of Mont Blanc are displaced, and carried down a certain distance every week; and as it is only for three or four months that the flow of the stream is checked by frost, we may certainly allow eighty tons for the mass which it annually moves.

It is not worth while to enter into any calculation of the relation borne by this runlet to the great torrents which descend from the chain of Mont Blanc into the valley of Chamouni. To call it the thousandth part of the glacier waters, would give a ludicrous under-estimate of their total power; but even so calling it, we should find for result that eighty thousand tons of mountain must be yearly transformed into drifted sand, and carried down a certain distance.* How much greater than this is the actual quantity so transformed I cannot tell; but take this quantity as certain, and consider that this represents merely the results of the labor of the constant summer streams, utterly irrespective of all sudden falls of stones and of masses of mountain (a single thunderbolt will sometimes leave a scar on the flank of a soft rock, looking like a trench for a railroad); and we shall then begin to appre-

* How far, is another question. The sand which the stream brings from the bottom of one eddy in its course, it throws down in the next; all that is *proved* by the above trial is, that so many tons of material are annually carried down by it a certain number of feet.

hend something of the operation of the great laws of change, which are the conditions of all material existence, however apparently enduring. The hills, which, as compared with living beings, seem "everlasting," are, in truth, as perishing as they: its veins of flowing fountain weary the mountain heart, as the crimson pulse does ours; the natural force of the iron crag is abated in its appointed time, like the strength of the sinews in a human old age; and it is but the lapse of the longer years of decay which, in the sight of its Creator, distinguishes the mountain range from the moth and the worm.

And hence two questions arise of the deepest interest. From what first created forms were the mountains brought into their present condition? into what forms will they change in the course of ages? Was the world anciently in a more or less perfect state than it is now? was it less or more fitted for the habitation of the human race? and are the changes which it is now undergoing favorable to that race or not? The present conformation of the earth appears dictated, as has been shown in the preceding chapters, by supreme wisdom and kindness. And yet its former state must have been different from what it is now; as its present one from that which it must assume hereafter. Is this, therefore, the earth's prime into which we are born; or is it, with all its beauty, only the wreck of Paradise?

I cannot entangle the reader in the intricacy of the inquiries necessary for anything like a satisfactory solution of these questions. But, were he to engage in such inquiries, their result would be his strong conviction of the earth's having been brought from a state in which it was utterly uninhabitable into one fitted for man; of its having been, when first inhabitable, more beautiful than it is now; and of its gradually tending to still greater inferiority of aspect, and unfitness for abode.

It has indeed been the endeavor of some geologists to prove that destruction and renovation are continually proceeding simultaneously in mountains as well as in organic creatures; that while existing eminences are being slowly lowered, others, in order to supply their place, are being slowly elevated; and that what is lost in beauty or healthiness in one spot is gained in another. But I cannot assent to such a conclusion. Evidence altogether incontrovertible points to a state of the earth in which it could be tenanted only by lower animals, fitted for the circumstances under which they lived by peculiar organizations. From this state it is admitted gradually to have been brought into that in which we now see it; and the circumstances of the existing dispensation, whatever may be the date of its endurance, seem to me to point not less clearly to an end than to an origin; to a creation, when "the earth was without form and void," and to a close, when it must either be renovated or destroyed.

In one sense, and in one only, the idea of a continuous order of things is admissible, in so far as the phenomena which introduced, and those which are to terminate, the existing dispensation, may have been, and may in future be, nothing more than a gigantic development of agencies which are in continual operation around us. The experience we possess of volcanic agency is not yet large enough to enable us to set limits to its force; and as we see the rarity of subterraneous action generally proportioned to its violence, there may be appointed, in the natural order of things, convulsions to take place after certain epochs, on a scale which the human race has not yet lived long enough to witness. The soft silver cloud which writhes innocently on the crest of Vesuvius, rests there without intermission; but the fury which lays cities in sepulchres of lava bursts forth only after intervals of centuries; and the still fiercer indignation of the greater volcanoes,

which makes half the globe vibrate with earthquake, and shrivels up whole kingdoms with flame, is recorded only in dim distances of history: so that it is not irrational to admit that there may yet be powers dormant, not destroyed, beneath the apparently calm surface of the earth, whose date of rest is the endurance of the human race, and whose date of action must be that of its doom. But whether such colossal agencies are indeed in the existing order of things or not, still the effective truth, for us, is one and the same. The earth, as a tormented and trembling ball, may have rolled in space for myriads of ages before humanity was formed from its dust; and as a devastated ruin it may continue to roll, when all that dust shall again have been mingled with ashes that never were warmed by life, or polluted by sin. But for us the intelligible and substantial fact is that the earth has been brought, by forces we know not of, into a form fitted for our habitation: on that form a gradual but destructive change is continually taking place, and the course of that change points clearly to a period when it will no more be fitted for the dwelling-place of men.

It is, therefore, not so much what these forms of the earth actually are, as what they are continually becoming, that we have to observe; nor is it possible thus to observe them without an instinctive reference to the first state out of which they have been brought. The existing torrent has dug its bed a thousand feet deep. But in what form was the mountain originally raised which gave that torrent its track and power? The existing precipice is wrought into towers and bastions by the perpetual fall of its fragments. In what form did it stand before a single fragment fell?

Yet to such questions, continually suggesting themselves, it is never possible to give a complete answer. For a certain distance, the past work of existing forces can be traced; but

there gradually the mist gathers, and the footsteps of more gigantic agencies are traceable in the darkness; and still, as we endeavor to penetrate farther and farther into departed time, the thunder of the Almighty power sounds louder and louder; and the clouds gather broader and more fearfully, until at last the Sinai of the world is seen altogether upon a smoke, and the fence of its foot is reached, which none can break through.

If, therefore, we venture to advance towards the spot where the cloud first comes down, it is rather with the purpose of fully pointing out that there *is* a cloud, than of entering into it. It is well to have been fully convinced of the existence of the mystery, in an age far too apt to suppose that everything which is visible is explicable, and everything that is present, eternal.

In the actual form of any mountain peak, there must usually be traceable the shadow or skeleton of its former self; like the obscure indications of the first frame of a war-worn tower, preserved, in some places, under the heap of its ruins, in others to be restored in imagination from the thin remnants of its tottering shell; while here and there, in some sheltered spot, a few unfallen stones retain their Gothic sculpture, and a few touches of the chisel, or stains of color, inform us of the whole mind and perfect skill of the old designer. With this great difference, nevertheless, that in the human architecture the builder did not calculate upon ruin, nor appoint the course of impendent desolation; but that in the hand of the great Architect of the mountains, time and decay are as much the instruments of His purpose as the forces by which He first led forth the troops of hills in leaping flocks:—the lightning and the torrent, and the wasting and weariness of innumerable ages, all bear their part in the working out of one consistent plan; and the Builder of the temple for ever stands

beside His work, appointing the stone that is to fall, and the pillar that is to be abased, and guiding all the seeming wildness of chance and change, into ordained splendors and foreseen harmonies.

I believe, for general development of human intelligence and sensibility, country of this kind is about the most perfect that exists. A richer landscape, as that of Italy, enervates, or causes wantonness; a poorer contracts the conceptions, and hardens the temperament of both mind and body; and one more curiously or prominently beautiful deadens the sense of beauty. Even what is here of attractiveness,—far exceeding, as it does, that of most of the thickly peopled districts of the temperate zone,—seems to act harmfully on the poetical character of the Swiss; but take its inhabitants all in all, as with deep love and stern penetration they are painted in the works of their principal writer, Gotthelf, and I believe we shall not easily find a peasantry which would completely sustain comparison with them.

To myself, mountains are the beginning and the end of all natural scenery; in them, and in the forms of inferior landscape that lead to them, my affections are wholly bound up; and though I can look with happy admiration at the lowland flowers, and woods, and open skies, the happiness is tranquil and cold, like that of examining detached flowers in a conservatory, or reading a pleasant book; and if the scenery be resolutely level, insisting upon the declaration of its own flatness in all the detail of it, as in Holland, or Lincolnshire, or Central Lombardy, it appears to me like a prison, and I cannot long endure it. But the slightest rise and fall in the road,—a mossy bank at the side of a crag of chalk, with brambles at its brow, overhanging it,—a ripple over three or four stones in the stream by the bridge,—above all, a wild bit

of ferny ground under a fir or two, looking as if, possibly, one might see a hill if one got to the other side of the trees, will instantly give me intense delight, because the shadow, or the hope, of the hills is in them.

And, in fact, much of the apparently harmful influence of hills on the religion of the world is nothing else than their general gift of exciting the poetical and inventive faculties, in peculiarly solemn tones of mind. Their terror leads into devotional casts of thought; their beauty and wildness prompt the invention at the same time; and where the mind is not gifted with stern reasoning powers, or protected by purity of teaching, it is sure to mingle the invention with its creed, and the vision with its prayer. Strictly speaking, we ought to consider the superstitions of the hills, universally, as a form of poetry; regretting only that men have not yet learned how to distinguish poetry from well-founded faith.

It has always appeared to me that there was, even in healthy mountain districts, a certain degree of inevitable melancholy; nor could I ever escape from the feeling that here, where chiefly the beauty of God's working was manifested to men, warning was also given, and that to the full, of the enduring of His indignation against sin.

It seems one of the most cunning and frequent of self-deceptions to turn the heart away from this warning and refuse to acknowledge anything in the fair scenes of the natural creation but beneficence. Men in general lean towards the light, so far as they contemplate such things at all, most of them passing "by on the other side," either in mere plodding pursuit of their own work, irrespective of what good or evil is around them, or else in selfish gloom, or selfish delight, resulting from their own circumstances at the moment. Of those who give themselves to any true contem-

plation, the plurality, being humble, gentle, and kindly-hearted, look only in nature for what is lovely and kind; partly, also, God gives the disposition to every healthy human mind in some degree to pass over or even harden itself against evil things, else the suffering would be too great to be borne; and humble people, with a quiet trust that everything is for the best, do not fairly represent the facts to themselves, thinking them none of their business. So, what between hard-hearted people, thoughtless people, busy people, humble people, and cheerfully-minded people,—giddiness of youth, and pre-occupations of age,—philosophies of faith, and cruelties of folly,—priest and Levite, masquer and merchantman, all agreeing to keep their own side of the way,—the evil that God sends to warn us gets to be forgotten, and the evil that He sends to be mended by us gets left unmended. And then, because people shut their eyes to the dark indisputableness of the facts in front of them, their Faith, such as it is, is shaken or uprooted by every darkness in what is revealed to them. In the present day it is not easy to find a well-meaning man among our more earnest thinkers, who will not take upon himself to dispute the whole system of redemption, because he cannot unravel the mystery of the punishment of sin. But can he unravel the mystery of the punishment of NO sin? Can he entirely account for all that happens to a cab-horse? Has he ever looked fairly at the fate of one of those beasts as it is dying,—measured the work it has done, and the reward it has got, put his hand upon the bloody wounds through which its bones are piercing, and so looked up to Heaven with an entire understanding of Heaven's ways about the horse! Yet the horse is a fact—no dream—no revelation among the myrtle trees by night; and the dust it dies upon, and the dogs that eat it, are facts; and yonder happy person, whose the horse was it till its knees were broken over the

hurdles, who had an immortal soul to begin with, and wealth and peace to help forward his immortality; who has also devoted the powers of his soul, and body, and wealth, and peace, to the spoiling of houses, the corruption of the innocent, and the oppression of the poor; and has, at this actual moment of his prosperous life, as many curses waiting round about him in calm shadow, with their death's eyes fixed upon him, biding their time, as ever the poor cab-horse had launched at him in meaningless blasphemies, when his failing feet stumbled at the stones,—this happy person shall have no stripes,—shall have only the horse's fate of annihilation; or, if other things are indeed reserved for him, Heaven's kindness or omnipotence is to be doubted therefore.

We cannot reason of these things. But this I know—and this may by all men be known—that no good or lovely thing exists in this world without its correspondent darkness; and that the universe presents itself continually to mankind under the stern aspect of warning, or of choice, the good and the evil set on the right hand and the left.

And in this mountain gloom, which weighs so strongly upon the human heart that in all time hitherto, as we have seen, the hill defiles have been either avoided in terror or inhabited in penance, there is but the fulfilment of the universal law, that where the beauty and wisdom of the Divine working are most manifested, there also are manifested most clearly the terror of God's wrath, and inevitableness of His power.

Nor is this gloom less wonderful so far as it bears witness to the error of human choice, even when the nature of good and evil is most definitely set before it. The trees of Paradise were fair; but our first parents hid themselves from God "in medio ligni Paradisi,"—in the midst of the trees of the garden. The hills were ordained for the help of man; but, instead of raising his eyes to the hills, from whence cometh

his help, he does his idol sacrifice "upon every high hill and under every green tree." The mountain of the Lord's house is established above the hills; but Nadab and Abihu shall see under His feet the body of heaven in his clearness, yet go down to kindle the censer against their own souls. And so to the end of time it will be; to the end, that cry will still be heard along the Alpine winds, "Hear, oh ye mountains, the Lord's controversy!" Still, their gulfs of thawless ice, and unretarded roar of tormented waves, and deathful falls of fruitless waste and unredeemed decay, must be the image of the souls of those who have chosen the darkness, and whose cry shall be to the mountains to fall on them, and to the hills to cover them; and still, to the end of time, the clear waters of the unfailing springs, and the white pasture-lilies in their clothed multitude, and the abiding of the burning peaks in their nearness to the opened heaven, shall be the types, and the blessings, of those who have chosen light, and of whom it is written, "The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, righteousness."

How were the gigantic fields of shattered marble conveyed from the ledges which were to remain exposed? No signs of violence are found on these ledges; what marks there are, the rain and natural decay have softly traced through a long series of years. Those very time-marks may have indeed effaced mere superficial appearances of convulsion; but could they have effaced all evidence of the action of such floods as would have been necessary to carry bodily away the whole ruin of a block of marble leagues in length and breadth, and a quarter of a mile thick? Ponder over the intense marvellousness of this.

And yet no trace of the means by which all this was effected is left. The rock stands forth in its white and rugged mystery, as if its peak had been born out of the blue sky. The

strength that raised it, and the sea that wrought upon it, have passed away, and left no sign; and we have no words wherein to describe their departure, no thoughts to form about their action, than those of the perpetual and unsatisfied interrogation,—

"What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest?
And ye mountains, that ye skipped like lambs?"

As we pass beneath the hills which have been shaken by earthquake and torn by convulsion, we find that periods of perfect repose succeeded those of destruction. The pools of calm water lie clear beneath their fallen rocks, the water-lilies gleam, and the reeds whisper among their shadows; the village rises again over the forgotten graves, and its church-tower, white through the storm-twilight, proclaims a renewed appeal to His protection in whose hand "are all the corners of the earth, and the strength of the hills is His also." There is no loveliness of Alpine valley that does not teach the same lesson. It is just where "the mountain falling cometh to naught, and the rock is removed out of his place," that, in process of years, the fairest meadows bloom between the fragments, the clearest rivulets murmur from their crevices among the flowers, and the clustered cottages, each sheltered beneath some strength of mossy stone, now to be removed no more, and with their pastured flocks around them, safe from the eagle's stoop and the wolf's ravin, have written upon their fronts, in simple words, the mountaineer's faith in the ancient promise—

"Neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh;
"For thou shalt be in league with the Stones of the Field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee."

The idea of retirement from the world for the sake of self-mortification, of combat with demons, or communion with

angels, and with their king,—authoritatively commended as it was to all men by the continual practice of Christ Himself,—gave to all mountain solitude at once a sanctity and a terror, in the mediæval mind, which were altogether different from anything that it had possessed in the un-Christian periods. On the one side, there was an idea of sanctity attached to rocky wilderness, because it had always been among hills that the Deity had manifested himself most intimately to men, and to the hills that His saints had nearly always retired for meditation, for especial communion with Him, and to prepare for death. Men acquainted with the history of Moses, alone at Horeb, or with Israel at Sinai,—of Elijah by the brook Cherith, and in the Horeb cave; of the deaths of Moses and Aaron on Hor and Nebo; of the preparation of Jephthah's daughter for her death among the Judea Mountains; of the continual retirement of Christ himself to the mountains for prayer, His temptation in the desert of the Dead Sea, His sermon on the hills of Capernaum, His transfiguration on the crest of Tabor, and his evening and morning walks over Olivet for the four or five days preceding His crucifixion,—were not likely to look with irreverent or unloving eyes upon the blue hills that girded their golden horizon, or drew upon them the mysterious clouds out of the height of the darker heaven. But with this impression of their greater sanctity was involved also that of a peculiar terror. In all this,—their haunting by the memories of prophets, the presences of angels, and the everlasting thoughts and words of the Redeemer,—the mountain ranges seemed separated from the active world, and only to be fitly approached by hearts which were condemnatory of it. Just in so much as it appeared necessary for the noblest men to retire to the hill-recesses before their missions could be accomplished or their spirits perfected, in so far did the daily world seem by comparison to be pronounced profane

and dangerous; and to those who loved that world, and its work, the mountains were thus voiceful with perpetual rebuke, and necessarily contemplated with a kind of pain and fear, such as a man engrossed by vanity, feels at being by some accident forced to hear a startling sermon, or to assist at a funeral service. Every association of this kind was deepened by the practice and precept of the time; and thousands of hearts, which might otherwise have felt that there was loveliness in the wild landscape, shrank from it in dread, because they knew the monk retired to it for penance, and the hermit for contemplation.

Mark the significance of the earliest mention of mountains in the Mosaic books; at least, of those in which some Divine appointment or command is stated respecting them. They are first brought before us as refuges for God's people from the two judgments of water and fire. The ark *rests* upon the "mountains of Ararat;" and man, having passed through that great baptism unto death, kneels upon the earth first where it is nearest heaven, and mingles with the mountain clouds the smoke of his sacrifice of thanksgiving. Again: from the midst of the first judgment of fire, the command of the Deity to his servant is, "Escape to the mountain;" and the morbid fear of the hills, which fills any human mind after long stay in places of luxury and sin, is strangely marked in Lot's complaining reply: "I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me." The third mention, in way of ordinance, is a far more solemn one: "Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off." "The Place," the Mountain of Myrrh, or of bitterness, chosen to fulfil to all the seed of Abraham, far off and near, the inner meaning of promise regarded in that vow: "I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh mine help."

And the fourth is the delivery of the law on Sinai.

It seemed, then, to the monks, that the mountains were appointed by their Maker to be to man refuges from Judgment, signs of Redemption, and altars of Sanctification and obedience; and they saw them afterwards connected in the manner the most touching and gracious, with the death, after his task had been accomplished, of the first anointed Priest; the death, in like manner, of the first inspired Lawgiver; and, lastly, with the assumption of his office by the Eternal Priest, Lawgiver, and Saviour.

Observe the connection of these three events. Although the *time* of the deaths of Aaron and Moses was hastened by God's displeasure, we have not, it seems to me, the slightest warrant for concluding that the *manner* of their deaths was intended to be grievous or dishonorable to them. Far from this: it cannot, I think, be doubted that in the denial of the permission to enter the Promised Land, the whole punishment of their sins was included; and that as far as regarded the manner of their deaths, it must have been appointed for them by their Master in all tenderness and love; and with full purpose of ennobling the close of their service upon the earth. It might have seemed to *us* more honorable that both should have been permitted to die beneath the shadow of the Tabernacle, the congregation of Israel watching by their side; and all whom they loved gathered together to receive the last message from the lips of the meek lawgiver, and the last blessing from the prayer of the anointed priest. But it was not thus that they were permitted to die. Try to realize that going forth of Aaron from the midst of the congregation. He who had so often done sacrifice for their sins, going forth now to offer up his own spirit. He who had stood among them, between the dead and the living, and had seen the eyes of all that great multitude turned to him, that by his interces-

sion their breath might yet be drawn a moment more, going forth now to meet the Angel of Death face to face, and deliver himself into his hand. Try if you cannot walk, in thought, with those two brothers, and the son, as they passed the outmost tents of Israel, and turned, while yet the dew lay round about the camp, towards the slopes of Mount Hor; talking together for the last time, as step by step, they felt the steeper rising of the rocks, and hour after hour, beneath the ascending sun, the horizon grew broader as they climbed, and all the folded hills of Idumea, one by one subdued, showed amidst their hollows in the haze of noon, the windings of that long desert journey, now at last to close. But who shall enter into the thoughts of the High Priest, as his eye followed those paths of ancient pilgrimage; and, through the silence of the arid and endless hills, stretching even to the dim peak of Sinai, the whole history of those forty years was unfolded before him, and the mystery of his own ministries revealed to him; and that other Holy of Holies, of which the mountain peaks were the altars, and the mountain clouds the veil, the firmament of his Father's dwelling, opened to him still more brightly and infinitely as he drew nearer his death; until at last, on the shadeless summit,—from him on whom sin was to be laid no more—from him, on whose heart the names of sinful nations were to press their graven fire no longer,—the brother and the son took breastplate and ephod, and left him to his rest.

There is indeed a secretness in this calm faith and deep restraint of sorrow, into which it is difficult for us to enter; but the death of Moses himself is more easily to be conceived, and had in it circumstances still more touching, as far as regards the influence of the external scene. For forty years Moses had not been alone. The care and burden of all the people, the weight of their woe, and guilt, and death, had been upon him continually. The multitude had been laid

upon him as if he had conceived them; their tears had been his meat, night and day, until he had felt as if God had withdrawn His favor from him, and he had prayed that he might be slain, and not see his wretchedness.* And now, at last, the command came, "Get thee up into this mountain." The weary hands that had been so long stayed up against the enemies of Israel, might lean again upon the shepherd's staff, and fold themselves for the shepherd's prayer—for the shepherd's slumber. Not strange to his feet, though forty years unknown, the roughness of the bare mountain-path, as he climbed from ledge to ledge of Abarim; not strange to his aged eyes the scattered clusters of the mountain herbage, and the broken shadows of the cliffs, indented far across the silence of uninhabited ravines; scenes such as those among which, with none, as now, beside him but God, he had led his flocks so often; and which he had left, how painfully! taking upon him the appointed power, to make of the fenced city a wilderness, and to fill the desert with songs of deliverance. It was not to embitter the last hours of his life that God restored to him, for a day, the beloved solitudes he had lost; and breathed the peace of the perpetual hills around him, and cast the world in which he had labored and sinned far beneath his feet, in that mist of dying blue;—all sin, all wandering, soon to be forgotten for ever; the Dead Sea—a type of God's anger understood by him, of all men, most clearly, who had seen the earth open her mouth, and the sea his depth, to overwhelm the companies of those who contended with his Master—laid waveless beneath him; and beyond it, the fair hills of Judah, and the soft plains and banks of Jordan, purple in the evening light as with the blood of redemption, and fading in their distant fulness into mysteries of promise and of love.

* Numbers xi. 12, 15.

There, with his unabated strength, his undimmed glance, lying down upon the utmost rocks, with angels waiting near to contend for the spoils of his spirit, he put off his earthly armor. We do deep reverence to his companion prophet, for whom the chariot of fire came down from heaven; but was his death less noble, whom his Lord Himself buried in the vales of Moab, keeping, in the secrets of the eternal counsels, the knowledge of a sepulchre, from which he was to be called, in the fulness of time, to talk with that Lord upon Hermon, of the death that He should accomplish at Jerusalem?

And lastly, let us turn our thoughts for a few moments to the cause of the resurrection of these two prophets. We are all of us too much in the habit of passing it by, as a thing mystical and inconceivable, taking place in the life of Christ for some purpose not by us to be understood, or, at the best, merely as a manifestation of His divinity by brightness of heavenly light, and the ministering of the spirits of the dead, intended to strengthen the faith of His three chosen apostles. And in this, as in many other events recorded by the Evangelists, we lose half the meaning and evade the practical power upon ourselves, by never accepting in its fulness the idea that our Lord was "perfect man," "tempted in all things like as we are." Our preachers are continually trying, in all manner of subtle ways, to explain the union of the Divinity with the Manhood, an explanation which certainly involves first their being able to describe the nature of Deity itself, or, in plain words, to comprehend God. They never can explain in any one particular, the union of the natures; they only succeed in weakening the faith of their hearers as to the entireness of either. The thing they have to do is precisely the contrary to this—to insist upon the *entireness* of both. We never think of Christ enough as God, never enough as Man; the instinctive habit of our minds being always to miss of the

Divinity, and the reasoning and enforced habit to miss of the Humanity. We are afraid to harbor in our own hearts, or to utter in the hearing of others, any thought of our Lord, as hungering, tired, sorrowful, having a human soul, a human will, and affected by events of human life as a finite creature is; and yet one half of the efficiency of His atonement, and the whole of the efficiency of His example, depend on His having been this to the full.

Consider, therefore, the Transfiguration as it relates to the human feelings of our Lord. It was the first definite preparation for His death. He had foretold it to His disciples six days before; then takes with Him the three chosen ones into "an high mountain apart." From an exceeding high mountain, at the first taking on Him the ministry of life, He had beheld, and rejected the kingdoms of the earth and their glory: now, on a high mountain, He takes upon Him the ministry of death. Peter, and they that were with him, as in Gethsemane, were heavy with sleep. Christ's work had to be done alone.

The tradition is, that the Mount of Transfiguration was the summit of Tabor; but Tabor is neither a high mountain, nor was it in any sense a mountain "*apart;*" being in those years both inhabited and fortified. All the immediately preceding ministries of Christ had been at Cesarea Philippi. There is no mention of travel southward in the six days that intervened between the warning given to His disciples, and the going up into the hill. What other hill could it be than the southward slope of that goodly mountain, Hermon, which is indeed the centre of all the Promised Land, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt; the mount of fruitfulness, from which the springs of Jordan descended to the valleys of Israel. Along its mighty forest avenues, until the grass grew fair with the mountain lilies His feet dashed in

the dew of Hermon, He must have gone to pray His first recorded prayer about death; and from the steep of it, before He knelt, could see to the south all the dwelling-place of the people that had sat in darkness, and seen the great light, the land of Zabulon and of Naphtali, Galilee of the nations;—could see, even with His human sight, the gleam of that lake by Capernaum and Chorazin, and many a place loved by Him, and vainly ministered to, whose house was now left unto them desolate; and, chief of all, far in the utmost blue, the hills above Nazareth, sloping down to His old home: hills on which yet the stones lay loose, that had been taken up to cast at Him, when He left them for ever.

"And as he prayed, two men stood by him." Among many ways in which we miss the help and hold of Scripture, none is more subtle than our habit of supposing that, even as man, Christ was free from the Fear of Death. How could He then have been tempted as we are? since among all the trials of the earth, none spring from the dust more terrible than that Fear. It had to be borne by Him indeed, in a unity, which we can never comprehend, with the foreknowledge of victory,—as His sorrow for Lazarus, with the consciousness of the power to restore him; but it *had* to be borne, and that in its full earthly terror; and the presence of it is surely marked for us enough by the rising of those two at His side. When, in the desert, he was girding himself for the work of life, angels of life came and ministered unto Him; now, in the fair world, when He is girding himself for the work of death, the ministrants come to Him from the grave.

But from the grave conquered. One, from that tomb under Abarim, which His own hand had sealed so long ago; the other from the rest into which he had entered, without seeing corruption. There stood by Him Moses and Elias, and spake of His decease.

Then, when the prayer is ended, the task accepted, first, since the star paused over Him at Bethlehem, the full glory falls upon Him from heaven, and the testimony is borne to his everlasting Sonship and power. "Hear ye him."

If, in their remembrance of these things, and in their endeavor to follow in the footsteps of their Master, religious men of by-gone days, closing themselves in the hill solitudes, forgot sometimes, and sometimes feared, the duties they owed to the active world, we may perhaps pardon them more easily than we ought to pardon ourselves, if we neither seek any influence for good nor submit to it unsought, in scenes to which thus all the men whose writings we receive as inspired, together with their Lord, retired whenever they had any task or trial laid upon them needing more than their usual strength of spirit. Nor, perhaps, should we have unprofitably entered into the mind of the earlier ages, if among our other thoughts, as we watch the chains of the snowy mountains rise on the horizon, we should sometimes admit the memory of the hour in which their Creator, among their solitudes, entered on His travail for the salvation of our race; and indulge the dream, that as the flaming and trembling mountains of the earth seem to be the monuments of the manifesting of His terror on Sinai,—these pure and white hills, near to the heaven, and sources of all good to the earth, are the appointed memorials of that Light of His Mercy, that fell, snow-like, on the Mount of Transfiguration.

## TREES.

In speaking of trees generally, be it observed, when I say *all* trees I mean only those ordinary forest or copse trees of

Europe, which are the chief subjects of the landscape painter. I do not mean to include every kind of foliage which by any accident can find its way into a picture, but the ordinary trees of Europe,—oak, elm, ash, hazel, willow, birch, beech, poplar, chestnut, pine, mulberry, olive, ilex, carubbe, and such others. I do not purpose to examine the characteristics of each tree; it will be enough to observe the laws common to all. First, then, neither the stems nor the boughs of any of the above trees *taper*, except where they fork. Wherever a stem sends off a branch, or a branch a lesser bough, or a lesser bough a bud, the stem or the branch is, on the instant, less in diameter by the exact quantity of the branch or the bough they have sent off, and they remain of the same diameter; or if there be any change, rather increase than diminish until they send off another branch or bough. This law is imperative and without exception; no bough, nor stem, nor twig, ever tapering or becoming narrower towards its extremity by a hairbreadth, save where it parts with some portion of its substance at a fork or bud, so that if all the twigs and sprays at the top and sides of the tree, which are, and *have been*, could be united without loss of space, they would form a round log of the diameter of the trunk from which they spring.

But as the trunks of most trees send off twigs and sprays of light under foliage, of which every individual fibre takes precisely its own thickness of wood from the parent stem, and as many of these drop off, leaving nothing but a small excrescence to record their existence, there is frequently a slight and delicate appearance of tapering bestowed on the trunk itself; while the same operation takes place much more extensively in the branches, it being natural to almost all trees to send out from their young limbs more wood than they can support, which, as the stem increases, gets contracted at the

point of insertion, so as to check the flow of the sap, and then dies and drops off, leaving all along the bough, first on one side, then on another, a series of small excrescences, sufficient to account for a degree of tapering, which is yet so very slight, that if we select a portion of a branch with no real fork or living bough to divide it or diminish it, the tapering is scarcely to be detected by the eye; and if we select a portion without such evidence of past ramification, there will be found none whatsoever.

But nature takes great care and pains to conceal this uniformity in her boughs. They are perpetually parting with little sprays here and there, which steal away their substance cautiously, and where the eye does not perceive the theft, until, a little way above, it feels the loss; and in the upper parts of the tree, the ramifications take place so constantly and delicately, that the effect upon the eye is precisely the same as if the boughs actually tapered, except here and there, where some avaricious one, greedy of substance, runs on for two or three yards without parting with anything, and becomes ungraceful in so doing.

Hence we see that although boughs may, and must be represented as actually tapering, they must only be so when they are sending off foliage and sprays, and when they are at such a distance that the particular forks and divisions cannot be evident to the eye; and farther, even in such circumstances the tapering never can be sudden or rapid. No bough ever, with appearance of smooth tapering, loses more than one-tenth of its diameter in a length of ten diameters. Any greater diminution than this must be accounted for by visible ramification, and must take place by steps, at each fork.

One of the most remarkable characters of natural leafage is the constancy with which, while the leaves are arranged on the spray with exquisite regularity, that regularity is modi-

fied in their actual effect. For as in every group of leaves some are seen sideways, forming merely long lines, some foreshortened, some crossing each other, every one differently turned and placed from all the others, the forms of the leaves, though in themselves similar, give rise to a thousand strange and differing forms in the group; and the shadows of some, passing over the others, still farther disguise and confuse the mass, until the eye can distinguish nothing but a graceful and flexible disorder of innumerable forms, with here and there a perfect leaf on the extremity, or a symmetrical association of one or two, just enough to mark the specific character and to give unity and grace, but never enough to repeat in one group what was done in another—never enough to prevent the eye from feeling that, however regular and mathematical may be the structure of parts, what is composed out of them is as various and infinite as any other part of nature. Nor does this take place in general effect only. Break off an elm bough, three feet long, in full leaf, and lay it on the table before you, and try to draw it, leaf for leaf. It is ten to one if in the whole bough, (provided you do not twist it about as you work,) you find one form of a leaf exactly like another; perhaps you will not even have *one* complete. Every leaf will be oblique, or foreshortened, or curled, or crossed by another, or shaded by another, or have something or other the matter with it; and though the whole bough will look graceful and symmetrical, you will scarcely be able to tell how or why it does so, since there is not one line of it like another.

The last and most important truth to be observed respecting trees, is that their boughs always, in finely grown individuals, bear among themselves such a ratio of length as to describe with their extremities a symmetrical curve, constant for each species; and within this curve all the irregularities, segments, and divisions of the tree are included, each bough reaching the

limit with its extremity, but not passing it. When a tree is perfectly grown, each bough starts from the trunk with just so much wood as, allowing for constant ramification, will enable it to reach the terminal line; or if by mistake, it start with too little, it will proceed without ramifying till within a distance where it may safely divide; if on the contrary it start with too much, it will ramify quickly and constantly; or, to express the real operation more accurately, each bough, growing on so as to keep even with its neighbors, takes so much wood from the trunk as is sufficient to enable it to do so, more or less in proportion as it ramifies fast or slowly. In badly grown trees, the boughs are apt to fall short of the curve, or at least, there are so many jags and openings that its symmetry is interrupted; and in young trees, the impatience of the upper shoots frequently breaks the line; but in perfect and mature trees, every bough does its duty completely, and the line of curve is quite filled up, and the mass within it unbroken, so that the tree assumes the shape of a dome, as in the oak, or, in tall trees, of a pear, with the stalk downmost.

It is possible among plains, in the species of trees which properly belong to them, the poplars of Amiens, for instance, to obtain a serene simplicity of grace, which, as I said, is a better help to the study of gracefulness, as such, than any of the wilder groupings of the hills; so also, there are certain conditions of symmetrical luxuriance developed in the park and avenue, rarely rivalled in their way among mountains; and yet the mountain superiority in foliage is, on the whole, nearly as complete as it is in water; for exactly as there are some expressions in the broad reaches of a navigable lowland river, such as the Loire or Thames, not, in their way, to be matched among the rock rivers, and yet for all that a lowlander cannot be said to have truly seen the element of water at all; so even in his richest parks and avenues he cannot be

said to have truly seen trees. For the resources of trees are not developed until they have difficulty to contend with; neither their tenderness of brotherly love and harmony, till they are forced to choose their ways of various life where there is contracted room for them, talking to each other with their restrained branches. The various action of trees rooting themselves in inhospitable rocks, stooping to look into ravines, hiding from the search of glacier winds, reaching forth to the rays of rare sunshine, crowding down together to drink at sweetest streams, climbing hand in hand among the difficult slopes, opening in sudden dances round the mossy knolls, gathering into companies at rest among the fragrant fields, gliding in grave procession over the heavenward ridges,—nothing of this can be conceived among the unvexed and unvaried felicities of the lowland forest: while to all these direct sources of greater beauty are added, first the power of redundance,—the mere quality of foliage visible in the folds and on the promontories of a single Alp being greater than that of an entire lowland landscape (unless a view from some cathedral tower); and to this charm of redundance, that of clearer *visibility*,—tree after tree being constantly shown in successive height, one behind another, instead of the mere tops and flanks of masses, as in the plains; and the forms of multitudes of them continually defined against the clear sky, near and above, or against white clouds entangled among their branches, instead of being confused in dimness of distance.

There was only one thing belonging to hills that Shakespere seemed to feel as noble—the pine tree, and that was because he had seen it in Warwickshire, clumps of pine occasionally rising on little sandstone mounds, as at the place of execution of Piers Gaveston, above the lowland woods. He touches on this tree fondly again and again.

> "As rough,
> Their royal blood enchafed, as the rud'st wind,
> That by his top doth take the mountain pine,
> And make him stoop to the vale."

> "The strong-based promontory
> Have I made shake, and by the spurs plucked up
> The pine and cedar."

Where note his observance of the peculiar horizontal roots of the pine, spurred as it is by them like the claw of a bird, and partly propped, as the aiguilles by those rock promontories at their bases which I have always called their spurs, this observance of the pine's strength and animal-like grasp being the chief reason for his choosing it, above all other trees, for Ariel's prison. Again:

> "You may as well forbid the mountain pines
> To wag their high tops, and to make no noise
> When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven."

And yet again:

> "But when, from under this terrestrial ball,
> He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines."

I challenge the untravelled English reader to tell me what an olive-tree is like?

I know he cannot answer my challenge. He has no more idea of an olive-tree than if olives grew only in the fixed stars. Let him meditate a little on this one fact, and consider its strangeness, and what a wilful and constant closing of the eyes to the most important truths it indicates on the part of the modern artist. Observe, a want of perception, not of science. I do not want painters to tell me any scientific facts about olive-trees. But it had been well for them to have felt and seen the olive-tree; to have loved it for Christ's sake,

partly also for the helmed Wisdom's sake which was to the heathen in some sort as that nobler Wisdom which stood at God's right hand, when He founded the earth and established the heavens. To have loved it even to the hoary dimness of its delicate foliage, subdued and faint of hue, as if the ashes of the Gethsemane agony had been cast upon it for ever; and to have traced, line for line, the gnarled writhings of its intricate branches, and the pointed fretwork of its light and narrow leaves, inlaid on the blue field of the sky, and the small rosy-white stars of its spring blossoming, and the beads of sable fruit scattered by autumn along its topmost boughs—the right, in Israel, of the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow,—and, more than all, the softness of the mantle, silver grey, and tender like the down on a bird's breast, with which, far away, it veils the undulation of the mountains; these it had been well for them to have seen and drawn, whatever they had left unstudied in the gallery.

The Greek delighted in the grass for its usefulness; the mediæval, as also we moderns, for its color and beauty. But both dwell on it as the *first* element of the lovely landscape; Dante thinks the righteous spirits of the heathen enough comforted in Hades by having even the *image* of green grass put beneath their feet; the happy resting-place in Purgatory has no other delight than its grass and flowers; and, finally, in the terrestrial paradise, the feet of Matilda pause where the Lethe stream first bends the blades of grass. Consider a little what a depth there is in this great instinct of the human race. Gather a single blade of grass, and examine for a minute, quietly, its narrow sword-shaped strip of fluted green. Nothing, as it seems there, of notable goodness or beauty. A very little strength, and a very little tallness, and a few delicate ong lines meeting in a point,—not a perfect point neither,

but blunt and unfinished, by no means a creditable or apparently much cared for example of Nature's workmanship; made, as it seems, only to be trodden on to-day, and to-morrow to be cast into the oven; and a little pale and hollow stalk, feeble and flaccid, leading down to the dull brown fibres of roots. And yet, think of it well, and judge whether of all the gorgeous flowers that beam in summer air, and of all strong and goodly trees, pleasant to the eyes and good for food,—stately palm and pine, strong ash and oak, scented citron, burdened vine,—there be any by man so deeply loved, by God so highly graced, as that narrow point of feeble green. It seems to me not to have been without a peculiar significance, that our Lord, when about to work the miracle which, of all that He showed, appears to have been felt by the multitude as the most impressive,—the miracle of the loaves,—commanded the people to sit down by companies "upon the green grass." He was about to feed them with the principal produce of earth and the sea, the simplest representations of the food of mankind. He gave them the *seed* of the herb; He bade them sit down upon the herb itself, which was as great a gift, in its fitness for their joy and rest, as its perfect fruit, for their sustenance; thus, in this single order and act, when rightly understood, indicating for evermore how the Creator had entrusted the comfort, consolation, and sustenance of man, to the simplest and most despised of all the leafy families of the earth. And well does it fulfil its mission. Consider what we owe merely to the meadow grass, to the covering of the dark ground by that glorious enamel, by the companies of those soft, and countless, and peaceful spears. The fields! Follow but forth for a little time the thoughts of all that we ought to recognise in those words. All spring and summer is in them,—the walks by silent, scented paths,—the rests in noonday heat,—the joy of herds and flocks,—the

power of all shepherd life and meditation,—the life of sunlight upon the world, falling in emerald streaks, and failing in soft blue shadows, where else it would have struck upon the dark mould, or scorching dust,—pastures beside the pacing brooks, soft banks and knolls of lowly hills,—thymy slopes of down overlooked by the blue line of lifted sea,—crisp lawns all dim with early dew, or smooth in evening warmth of barred sunshine, dinted by happy feet, and softening in their fall the sound of loving voices: all these are summed in those simple words; and these are not all. We may not measure to the full the depth of this heavenly gift, in our own land; though still, as we think of it longer, the infinite of that meadow sweetness, Shakspere's peculiar joy, would open on us more and more, yet we have it but in part. Go out, in the spring time, among the meadows that slope from the shores of the Swiss lakes to the roots of their lower mountains. There, mingled with the taller gentians and the white narcissus, the grass grows deep and free; and as you follow the winding mountain paths, beneath arching boughs all veiled and dim with blossom,—paths that for ever droop and rise over the green banks and mounds sweeping down in scented undulation, steep to the blue water, studded here and there with new-mown heaps, filling all the air with fainter sweetness,—look up towards the higher hills, where the waves of everlasting green roll silently into their long inlets among the shadows of the pines; and we may, perhaps, at last know the meaning of those quiet words of the 147th Psalm, "He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains."

There are also several lessons symbolically connected with this subject, which we must not allow to escape us. Observe, the peculiar characters of the grass, which adapt it especially for the service of man, are its apparent *humility* and *cheerfulness*. Its humility, in that it seems created only for lowest

service,—appointed to be trodden on, and fed upon. Its cheerfulness, in that it seems to exult under all kinds of violence and suffering. You roll it, and it is stronger the next day; you mow it, and it multiplies its shoots, as if it were grateful; you tread upon it, and it only sends up richer perfume. Spring comes, and it rejoices with all the earth,—glowing with variegated flame of flowers,—waving in soft depth of fruitful strength. Winter comes, and though it will not mock its fellow plants by growing then, it will not pine and mourn, and turn colorless or leafless as they. It is always green; and it is only the brighter and gayer for the hoar-frost.

Now, these two characters—of humility, and joy under trial—are exactly those which most definitely distinguish the Christian from the Pagan spirit. Whatever virtue the pagan possessed was rooted in pride, and fruited with sorrow. It began in the elevation of his own nature; it ended but in the "verde smalto"—the hopeless green—of the Elysian fields. But the Christian virtue is rooted in self-debasement, and strengthened under suffering by gladness of hope. And remembering this, it is curious to observe how utterly without gladness the Greek heart appears to be in watching the flowering grass, and what strange discords of expression arise sometimes in consequence. There is one, recurring once or twice in Homer, which has always pained me. He says, "the Greek army was on the fields, as thick as flowers in the spring." It might be so; but flowers in spring time are not the image by which Dante would have numbered soldiers on their path of battle. Dante could not have thought of the flowering of the grass but as associated with happiness. There is a still deeper significance in a passage from Homer, describing Ulysses casting himself down on the *rushes* and the corn-giving land at the river shore,—the rushes and corn being to him only good for rest and sustenance,—when we compare it with

that in which Dante tells us he was ordered to descend to the shore of the lake as he entered Purgatory, to gather a *rush*, and gird himself with it, it being to him the emblem not only of rest, but of humility under chastisement, the rush (or reed) being the only plant which can grow there;—"no plant which bears leaves, or hardens its bark, can live on that shore, because it does not yield to the chastisement of its waves." It cannot but strike the reader singularly how deep and harmonious a significance runs through all these words of Dante—how every syllable of them, the more we penetrate it, becomes a seed of farther thought. For, follow up this image of the girdling with the reed, under trial, and see to whose feet it will lead us. As the grass of the earth, thought of as the herb yielding seed, leads us to the place where our Lord commanded the multitude to sit down by companies upon the green grass; so the grass of the waters, thought of as sustaining itself among the waters of affliction, leads us to the place where a stem of it was put into our Lord's hand for his sceptre; and in the crown of thorns, and the rod of reed, was foreshown the everlasting truth of the Christian ages—that all glory was to be begun in suffering, and all power in humility.

Assembling the images we have traced, and adding the simplest of all, from Isaiah xl. 6., we find, the grass and flowers are types, in their passing, of the passing of human life, and, in their excellence, of the excellence of human life; and this in a twofold way; first, by their Beneficence, and then, by their endurance:—the grass of the earth, in giving the seed of corn, and in its beauty under tread of foot and stroke of scythe; and the grass of the waters, in giving its freshness for our rest, and in its bending before the wave.*

* So also in Isa. xxxv. 7., the prevalence of righteousness and peace over all evil is thus foretold:

"In the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be *grass*, with *reeds* and *rushes*."

But understood in the broad human and Divine sense, the "*herb* yielding seed" (as opposed to the fruit-tree yielding fruit) includes a third family of plants, and fulfils a third office to the human race. It includes the great family of the lints and flaxes, and fulfils thus the *three* offices of giving food, raiment, and rest. Follow out this fulfilment; consider the association of the linen garment and the linen embroidery, with the priestly office, and the furniture of the tabernacle; and consider how the rush has been, in all time, the first natural carpet thrown under the human foot. Then next observe the three virtues definitely set forth by the three families of plants; not arbitrarily or fancifully associated with them, but in all the three cases marked for us by Scriptural words:

1st. Cheerfulness, or joyful serenity; in the grass for food and beauty.—"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin."

2nd. Humility; in the grass for rest.—"A bruised reed shall He not break."

3rd. Love; in the grass for clothing (because of its swift kindling),—"The smoking flax shall he not quench."

And then, finally, observe the confirmation of these last two images in, I suppose, the most important prophecy, relating to the future state of the Christian Church, which occurs in the Old Testament, namely, that contained in the closing chapters of Ezekiel. The measures of the Temple of God are to be taken; and because it is only by charity and humility that those measures ever can be taken, the angel has "a line of *flax* in his hand, and a measuring *reed*." The use of the line was to measure the land, and of the reed to take the dimensions of the buildings; so the buildings of the church, or its labors, are to be measured by *humility*, and its territory or land, by *love*.

The limits of the Church have, indeed, in later days, been

measured, to the world's sorrow, by another kind of flaxen line, burning with the fire of unholy zeal, not with that of Christian charity; and perhaps the best lesson which we can finally take to ourselves, in leaving these sweet fields, is the memory that, in spite of all the fettered habits of thought of his age, this great Dante, this inspired exponent of what lay deepest at the heart of the early Church, placed his terrestrial paradise where there had ceased to be fence or division, and where the grass of the earth was bowed down, in unity of direction, only by the soft waves that bore with them the for getfulness of evil.

## Part 3.

# ARCHITECTURE.

EVERY man has at some time of his life personal interest in Architecture He has influence on the design of some public building; or he has to buy, or build, or alter his own house. It signifies less whether the knowledge of other arts be general or not; men may live without buying pictures or statues. They *must* do mischief, and waste their money if they do not know how to turn it to account.

# Part 3.

## ARCHITECTURE.

### ART.

Architecture (considered as a fine art) is the art which so disposes and adorns the edifices raised by man for whatsoever uses, that the sight of them contribute to his mental health, power, and pleasure.

Architecture proper, then, naturally arranges itself under five heads:—

Devotional; including all buildings raised for God's service or honor.

Memorial; including both monuments and tombs.

Civil; including every edifice raised by nations or societies, for purposes of common business or pleasure.

Military; including all private and public architecture of defence.

Domestic; including every rank and kind of dwelling-place.

Those peculiar aspects which belong to the first of the arts, I have endeavored to trace; and since, if truly stated, they must necessarily be, not only safeguards against error, but sources of every measure of success, I do not think I claim too much for them in calling them the Lamps of Architecture.

The seven Lamps of Architecture—

1. The Lamp of Sacrifice.
2. The Lamp of Truth.

3. The Lamp of Power.
4. The Lamp of Beauty.
5. The Lamp of Life.
6. The Lamp of Memory.
7. The Lamp of Obedience.

I. The Lamp or Spirit of Sacrifice prompts us to the offering of precious things, merely because they are precious, not because they are useful or necessary. Was it necessary to the completeness, as a type, of the Levitical sacrifice, or to its utility as an explanation of divine purposes, that it should cost anything to the person in whose behalf it was offered? Costliness was *generally* a condition of the acceptableness of the sacrifice. "Neither will I offer unto the Lord my God of that which did cost me nothing." That costliness, therefore, must be an acceptable condition in all human offerings at all times; for if it was pleasing to God once, it must please Him always, unless directly forbidden by Him afterwards, which it has never been.

Was the glory of the tabernacle necessary to set forth or image His Divine glory to the minds of His people? What! purple or scarlet necessary to the people who had seen the great river of Egypt run scarlet to the sea, under His condemnation? What! golden lamp and cherub necessary for those who had seen the fires of heaven falling like a mantle on Mount Sinai, and its golden courts opened to receive their mortal lawgiver? What! silver clasp and fillet necessary when they had seen the silver waves of the Red Sea clasp in their arched hollows the corpses of the horse and his rider? Nay—not so. There was but one reason, and that an eternal one; that as the covenant that He made with man was accompanied with some external sign of its continuance, and of His remembrance of it, so the acceptance of that covenant might be marked and signified by use, in some external sign of their

love and obedience, and surrender of themselves and theirs to His will; and that their gratitude to Him, and continual remembrance of Him, might have at once their expression and their enduring testimony in the presentation to Him, not only of the firstlings of the herd and fold, not only of the fruits of the earth and the tithe of time, but of all treasures of wisdom and beauty; of the thought that invents, and the hand that labors; of wealth of wood, and weight of stone; of the strength of iron, and of the light of gold.

It has been said—it ought always to be said, for it is true—that a better and more honorable offering is made to our Master in ministry to the poor, in extending the knowledge of His name, in the practice of the virtues by which that name is hallowed, than in material presents to His temple. Assuredly it is so; woe to all who think that any other kind or manner of offering may in any wise take the place of these! Do the people need place to pray, and calls to hear His word? Then it is no time for smoothing pillars or carving pulpits; let us have enough first of walls and roofs. Do the people need teaching from house to house, and bread from day to day? Then they are deacons and ministers we want, not architects. I insist on this, I plead for this; but let us examine ourselves, and see if this be indeed the reason for our backwardness in the lesser work. The question is not between God's house and His poor: it is not between God's house and His gospel. It is between God's house and ours. Have we no tesselated colors on our floors? no frescoed fancies on our roofs? no niched statuary in our corridors? no gilded furniture in our chambers? no costly stones in our cabinets? Has even the tithe of these been offered? They are, or they ought to be, the signs that enough has been devoted to the great purposes of human stewardship, and that there remains to us what we can spend in luxury; but there is

a greater and prouder luxury than this selfish one--that of bringing a portion of such things as these into sacred service, and presenting them for a memorial that our pleasure as well as our toil has been hallowed by the remembrance of Him who gave both the strength and the reward. And until this has been done, I do not see how such possessions can be retained in happiness. I do not understand the feeling which would arch our own gates and pave our own thresholds, and leave the church with its narrow door and foot-worn sill; the feeling which enriches our own chambers with all manner of costliness, and endures the bare wall and mean compass of the temple.

The tenth part of the expense which is sacrificed in domestic vanities, would, if collectively offered and wisely employed, build a marble church for every town in England; such a church as it should be a joy and a blessing even to pass near in our daily ways and walks, and as it would bring the light into the eyes to see from far, lifting its fair height above the purple crowd of humble roofs.

I have said for every town: I do not want a marble church for every village; nay, I do not want marble churches at all for their own sakes, but for the sake of the spirit that would build them. The church has no need of any visible splendors; her power is independent of them, her purity is in some degree opposed to them. The simplicity of a pastoral sanctuary is lovelier than the majesty of an urban temple; and it may be more than questioned whether, to the people, such majesty has ever been the source of any increase of effective piety; but to the builders it has been, and must ever be. It is not the church we want, but the sacrifice; not the emotion of admiration, but the act of adoration; not the gift, but the giving (St. John xii. 5).

God never forgets any work or labor of love; and whatever it may be of which the first and best portions or powers

have been presented to Him, He will multiply and increase sevenfold. Therefore, though it may not be necessarily the interest of religion to admit the service of the arts, the arts will never flourish till they have been primarily devoted to that service—devoted both by architect and employer; by the one in scrupulous, earnest, affectionate design; by the other in expenditure at least more frank, at least less calculating, than that which he would admit in the indulgence of his own private feelings.

## II.—THE LAMP OF TRUTH.

There are some faults slight in the sight of love, some errors slight in the estimate of wisdom; but Truth forgives no insult, and endures no stain.

I would have the Spirit or Lamp of Truth clear in the hearts of our artists and handicraftsmen, not as if the truthful practice of handicrafts could far advance the cause of Truth, but because I would fain see the handicrafts themselves urged by the spurs of chivalry.

We may not be able to command good, or beautiful, or inventive architecture, but we *can* command an honest architecture: the meagreness of poverty may be pardoned, the sternness of utility respected; but what is there but scorn for the meanness of deception?

The worth of a diamond is simply the understanding of the time it must take to look for it before it is found, and the worth of an ornament is the time it must take before it can be cut. I suppose that hand-wrought ornament can no more be generally known from machine-work than a diamond can be known from paste. Yet exactly as a woman of feeling would not wear

false jewels, so would a builder of honor disdain false ornaments. The using of them is just as downright and inexcusable as a lie. You use that which pretends to a worth which it has not; which pretends to have cost, and to be, what it did not, and is not; it is an imposition, a vulgarity, an impertinence, and a sin. Nobody wants ornaments in this world, but everybody wants integrity. All the fair devices that ever were fancied, are not worth a lie.

This being a general law, there are, nevertheless, certain exceptions respecting particular substances and their uses. Thus in the use of brick; since that is known to be originally moulded, there is no reason why it should not be moulded into divers forms. It will never be supposed to have been cut, and therefore will cause no deception; it will have only the credit it deserves.

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### III.—THE LAMP OF POWER.

All building shows man either as gathering or governing; and the secrets of his success are his knowing what to gather, and how to rule.

There is a sympathy in the forms of noble building, with what is most sublime in natural things; and it is the governing Power, directed by this sympathy, whose operation I shall endeavor to trace.

In the edifices of Man there should be found reverent worship and following, not only of the spirit which rounds the pillars of the forest, and arches the vault of the avenue—which gives veining to the leaf, and polish to the shell, and grace to every pulse that agitates animal organization,—but of that also which upheaves the pillars of the earth, and builds

up her barren precipices into the coldness of the clouds, and lifts her shadowy cones of mountain purple into the pale arch of the sky; for these, and other glories more than these, refuse not to connect themselves in his thoughts, with the work of his own hand; the grey cliff loses not its nobleness when it reminds us of some Cyclopean waste of mural stone; the pinnacles of the rocky promontory arrange themselves, undegraded, into fantastic semblances of fortress towers; and even the awful cone of the far-off mountain has a melancholy mixed with that of its own solitude, which is cast from the images of nameless tumuli on white sea-shores, and of the heaps of reedy clay, into which chambered cities melt in their mortality.

Though mere size will not ennoble a mean design, yet every increase of magnitude will bestow upon it a certain degree of nobleness; so that it is well to determine, at first, whether the building is to be markedly beautiful, or markedly sublime.

It has often been observed that a building, in order to show its magnitude, must be seen all at once. It would be better to say, that it must have one visible bounding line from top to bottom, and from end to end. This bounding line from top to bottom may be inclined inwards, and the mass, therefore, pyramidal; or vertical, and the mass form one grand cliff; or inclined outwards, as in the advancing fronts of old houses, and, in a sort, in the Greek temple, and all buildings with heavy cornices or heads. I am much inclined, myself, to love the true vertical, or the vertical with a solemn frown of projection.

What is needful in the setting forth of magnitude in height, is right also in the marking it in area,—let it be gathered well together. Whatever infinity of fair form there may be in the maze of the forest, there is a fairer in the surface of the quiet

lake; and I hardly know that association of shaft or tracery for which I would exchange the warm sleep of sunshine on some smooth, broad, human-like front of marble. Nevertheless, if breadth is to be beautiful, its substance must in some sort be beautiful.

Positive shade is a more necessary and more sublime thing in an architect's hands than in a painter's. After size and weight the Power of architecture may be said to depend on the quantity of its shadow. As the great poem and the great fiction generally affect us most by the majesty of their masses of shade, and cannot take hold upon us if they affect a continuance of lyric sprightliness, but must be serious often, and sometimes melancholy, else they do not express the truth of this wild world of ours; so there must be, in this magnificently human art of architecture, some equivalent expression for the trouble and wrath of life, for its sorrow and its mystery; and this it can only give by depth or diffusion of gloom, by the frown upon its front, and the shadow of its recess. So that Rembrandtism is a noble manner in architecture, though a false one in painting; and I do not believe that ever any building was truly great, unless it had mighty masses, vigorous and deep, of shadow mingled with its surface. And among the first habits that a young architect should learn, is that of thinking in shadow, not looking at a design in its miserable liny skeleton, but conceiving it as it will be, when the dawn lights it, and the dusk leaves it, when its stones will be hot and its crannies cool; when the lizards will bask on the one, and the birds build in the other. Let him design with the sense of cold and heat upon him; let him cut out the shadows, as men dig wells in unwatered plains; and lead along the lights, as a founder does his hot metal; let him keep the full command of both, and see that he knows how they fall and where they fade.

Until our street architecture is bettered, until we give it some size and boldness, until we give our windows recess and our walls thickness, I know not how we can blame our architects for their feebleness in more important works. Their eyes are inured to narrowness and slightness; can we expect them at a word to conceive and deal with breadth and solidity? They ought not to live in our cities; there is that in their miserable walls which bricks up to death men's imaginations, as surely as ever perished forsworn men. An architect should live as little in cities as a painter. Send him to our hills, and let him study there what nature understands by a buttress, and what by a dome.

We have sources of Power in the imagery of our iron coasts and azure hills; of power more pure, nor less serene than that of the hermit spirit which once lighted with white lines of cloisters the glades of the Alpine pine, and raised into ordered spires the wild rocks of the Norman sea; which gave to the temple gate the depth and darkness of Elijah's Horeb cave; and lifted, out of the populous city, grey cliffs of lonely stone, into the midst of sailing birds and silent air.

Do not think you can have good architecture merely by paying for it? It is only by active and sympathetic attention to the domestic and every-day-work which is done for each of you, that you can educate either yourselves to the feeling or your builders to the doing of what is truly great.

Well but, you will answer, you cannot feel interested in Architecture: you do not care about and *cannot* care about it.

You think within yourselves, "it is not right that architecture should be interesting. It is a very grand thing this architecture, but essentially unentertaining. It is its duty to be dull, it is monotonous by law; it cannot be correct and yet amusing."

Believe me, it is not so. All things that are worth doing

in art, are interesting and attractive when they are done. There is no law of right which consecrates dulness. The proof of a thing's being right is, that it has power over the heart, that it excites us, wins us, or helps us.

All good art has the *capacity of pleasing*, if people will attend to it; there is no law against its pleasing; but on the contrary, something wrong either in the spectator or the art when it ceases to please.

"But what are we to do? We cannot make architects of ourselves." Pardon me, you can—and you ought. Architecture is an art for all men to learn, because all are concerned with it; and it is so simple, that there is no excuse for not being acquainted with its primary rules, any more than for ignorance of grammar or spelling, which are both of them far more difficult sciences.

Far less trouble than is necessary to learn how to play chess, or whist, or goff, tolerably,—far less than a schoolboy takes to win the meanest prize of the passing year, would acquaint you with all the main principles of the construction of a Gothic cathedral, and I believe you would hardly find the study less amusing.

## IV.—THE LAMP OF BEAUTY.

The value of Architecture depends on two distinct characters:—the one, the impression it receives from human power; the other, the image it bears of the natural creation.

It will be thought that I have somewhat limited the elements of architectural beauty to imitative forms. I do not

mean to assert that every arrangement of line is directly suggested by a natural object; but that all beautiful lines are adaptations of those which are commonest in the external creation; that in proportion to the richness of their association, the resemblance to natural work, as a type and help, must be more closely attempted, and more clearly seen; and that beyond a certain point, and that a very low one, man cannot advance in the invention of beauty, without directly imitating natural form.

There are many forms of so called decoration in Architecture, habitual, and received therefore with approval, or at all events without any venture at expression of dislike, which I have no hesitation in asserting to be not ornament at all, but to be ugly things, the expense of which ought, in truth, to be set down in the architect's contract, as "For Monstrification." I believe that we regard these customary deformities with a savage complacency, as an Indian does his flesh patterns and paint—all nations being in certain degrees and senses savage.

I suppose there is no conceivable form or grouping of forms but in some part of the universe an example of it may be found. On the shapes which in the every-day world are familiar to the eyes of men, God has stamped those characters of beauty which He has made it man's nature to love; while in certain exceptional forms He has shown that the adoption of the others was not a matter of necessity, but part of the adjusted harmony of creation. Knowing a thing to be frequent, we may assume it to be beautiful; and assume that which is most frequent to be most beautiful: I mean, of course, *visibly* frequent; for the forms of things which are hidden in caverns of the earth, or in the anatomy of animal frames, are evidently not intended by their Maker to bear the habitual gaze of man. And, again, by frequency I mean that limited and isolated frequency which is characteristic of all perfection,

as a rose is a common flower, but yet there are not so many roses on the tree as there are leaves. In this respect Nature is sparing of her highest, and lavish of her less beauty; but I call the flower as frequent as the leaf, because, each in its allotted quantity, where the one is, there will ordinarily be the other.

Architecture, in borrowing the objects of Nature, is bound to place them, as far as may be in her power, in such associations as may befit and express their origin. She is not to imitate directly the natural arrangement; she is not to carve irregular stems of ivy up her columns to account for the leaves at the top, but she is nevertheless to place her most exuberant vegetable ornament just where Nature would have placed it, and to give some indication of that radical and connected structure which Nature would have given it. Thus, the Corinthian capital is beautiful, because it expands under the abacus just as Nature would have expanded it; and because it looks as if the leaves had one root, though that root is unseen. And the flamboyant leaf-mouldings are beautiful, because they nestle and run up the hollows, and fill the angles, and clasp the shafts which natural leaves would have delighted to fill and to clasp. They are no mere cast of natural leaves: they are counted, orderly, and architectural; but they are naturally, and therefore beautifully placed.

What is the right place for architectural ornament? What is the peculiar treatment of ornament which renders it architectural?

Suppose that in time of serious occupation, of stern business, a companion should repeat in our ears, continually, some favorite passage of poetry, over and over again all day long. We should not only soon be utterly sick and weary of the sound of it, but that sound would, at the end of the day, have so sunk into the habit of the ear that the entire meaning

of the passage would be dead to us, and it would ever thenceforward require some effort to fix and recover it. The music of it would not meanwhile have aided the business in hand, while its own delightfulness would thenceforward be in a measure destroyed. It is the same with every other form of definite thought. If you violently press its expression to the senses, at times when the mind is otherwise engaged, that expression will be ineffective at the time, and will have its sharpness and clearness destroyed for ever.

Apply this to expressions of thought received by the eye. Remember that the eye is at your mercy more than the ear. "The eye it cannot choose but see." Now, if you present lovely forms to it when it cannot call the mind to help it in its work, and among objects of vulgar use and unhappy position, you will neither please the eye nor elevate the vulgar object. But you will fill and weary the eye with the beautiful form. It will never be of much use to you any more —its freshness and purity are gone.

Hence then a general law, of singular importance in the present day, a law of common sense—not to decorate things belonging to purposes of active and occupied life. Wherever you can rest, there decorate ; where rest is forbidden, so is beauty. You must not mix ornament with business, any more than you may mix play. Work first, and then rest. Work first, and then gaze, but do not use golden ploughshares, nor bind ledgers in enamel. Do not thrash with sculptured flails ; nor put bas-reliefs on millstones.

The most familiar position of Greek mouldings is in these days on shop-fronts—ornaments which were invented to adorn temples and beautify kings' palaces. There is not the smallest advantage in them where they are. Absolutely valueless —utterly without the power of giving pleasure, they only satiate the eye, and vulgarise their own forms. It is curious,

and it says little for our national probity on the one hand, or prudence on the other, to see the whole system of our street decoration based on the idea that people must be baited to a shop as moths are to a candle.

Must not beauty, then, it will be asked, be sought for in the forms which we associate with our every-day life? Yes, if you do it consistently, and in places where it can be calmly seen Put it in the drawing-room, not into the workshop; put it upon domestic furniture, not upon tools of handicraft. All men have sense of what is right in this manner, if they would only use and apply that sense.

There is no subject of street ornament so wisely chosen as the fountain, where it is a fountain of use; for it is just there that perhaps the happiest pause takes place in the labor of the day, when the pitcher is rested on the edge of it, and the breath of the bearer is drawn deeply, and the hair swept from the forehead, and the uprightness of the form declined against the marble ledge, and the sound of the kind word or light laugh mixes with the trickling of the falling water, heard shriller and shriller as the pitcher fills. What pause is so sweet as that—so full of the depth of ancient days, so softened with the calm of pastoral solitude?

Proportion and Abstraction are the two especial marks of architectural design as distinguished from all other.

Proportions are as infinite as possible airs in music; and it is just as rational an attempt to teach a young architect how to proportion truly and well by calculating for him the proportions of fine works, as it would be to teach him to compose melodies by calculating the mathematical relations of the notes in Beethoven's Adelaïde or Mozart's Requiem. The man who has eye and intellect will invent beautiful proportions, and cannot help it; but he can no more tell *us* how to do it than Wordsworth could tell us how to write

a sonnet, or than Scott could have told us how to plan a romance.

There is no proportion between equal things; they can have symmetry only, and symmetry without proportion is not composition. To compose is to arrange unequal things, and the first thing to be done in beginning a composition is to determine which is to be the principal thing. "Have one large thing and several smaller things, or one principal thing and several inferior things, and bind them well together."

Proportion is between three terms at *least.*

All art is abstract in its beginnings; that is to say, *it expresses only a small number of the qualities of the thing represented.*

The form of a tree on the Ninevite sculptures is much like that which, some twenty years ago, was familiar upon samplers. There is a resemblance between the work of a great nation, in this phase, and the work of childhood and ignorance.

In the next stage of art there is a condition of strength, in which the abstraction which was begun in incapability is continued in free will.

"Greater completion marks the progress of art, absolute completion usually its decline."

It is well that the young architect should be taught to think of imitative ornament as of the extreme grace of language; not to be regarded at first, not to be obtained at the cost of purpose, meaning, force, or conciseness, yet, indeed, a perfection—the least of all perfections, and yet the crowning one of all,—one, which by itself, and regarded in itself, is an architectural coxcombry, but yet is the sign of the most highly-trained mind and power when it is associated with others. It is a safe manner to design all things at first in severe abstraction, and to be prepared, if need were, to carry

them out in that form; then to mark the parts where high finish would be admissible.

I think the colors of architecture should be those of natural stones, partly because more durable, but also because more perfect and graceful.

I do not feel able to speak with any confidence respecting the touching of *sculpture* with color. I would only note one point, that sculpture is the representation of an idea, while architecture is itself a real thing. The idea may, as I think, be left colorless, and colored by the beholder's mind; but a reality ought to have reality in all its attributes; its color should be as fixed as its form.

The following list of noble characteristics occurs more or less in different buildings, some in one and some in another:—

1. Projection towards the top. 2. Breadth of flat surface. 3. Square compartments of that surface. 4. Varied and visible masonry. 5. Vigorous depth of shadow, exhibited especially by pierced traceries. 6. Varied proportion in ascent. 7. Lateral symmetry. 8. Sculpture most delicate at the base. 9. Enriched quantity of ornament at the top. 10. Sculpture abstract in inferior ornaments and mouldings, complete in animal forms, both to be executed in white marble. 11. Vivid color introduced in flat geometrical patterns, and obtained by the use of naturally colored stones.

These characteristics all together, and in their highest possible relative degrees, exist, as far as I know, only in one building in the world, the Campanile of Giotto at Florence. I remember well how, when a boy, I used to despise that Campanile, and think it meanly smooth and finished. But I have since lived beside it many a day, and looked out upon it from my windows by sun-light and moonlight, and I shall not soon forget how profound and gloomy appeared to me the savage-

ness of the Northern Gothic, when I afterwards stood, for the first time, beneath the front of Salisbury Cathedral.

The contrast is indeed strange, if it could be quickly felt, between the rising of those grey walls out of their quiet swarded space, like dark and barren rocks out of a green lake, with their rude, mouldering, rough-grained shafts, and triple lights, without tracery or other ornament than the martins' nests in the height of them, and that bright, smooth, sunny surface of glowing jasper, those spiral shafts and fairy traceries, so white, so faint, so crystalline, that their slight shapes are hardly traced in darkness on the pallor of the Eastern sky, that serene height of mountain alabaster, colored like a morning cloud, and chased like a sea-shell. And if this be, as I believe it, the model and mirror of perfect architecture, is there not something to be learned by looking back to the early life of him who raised it?

I said that the Power of the human mind had its growth in the Wilderness; much more must the love and the conception of that beauty, whose every line and hue we have seen to be, at the best, a faded image of God's daily work, and an arrested ray of some star of creation, be given chiefly in the places which he has gladdened by planting there the fir tree and the pine. Not within the walls of Florence, but among the far-away fields of her lilies, was the child trained who was to raise that headstone of Beauty above the towers of watch and war. Remember all that he became; count the sacred thoughts with which he filled the heart of Italy; ask those who followed him what they learned at his feet; and when you have numbered his labors, and received their testimony, if it seem to you that God had verily poured out upon this His servant no common nor restrained portion of His Spirit, and that he was indeed a king among the children of men, remember also that

the legend upon his crown was that of David's — 'I took thee from the sheepcote, and from following the sheep."

## V.—THE LAMP OF LIFE.

The creations of Architecture, being not essentially composed of things pleasant in themselves, as music of sweet sounds, or painting of fair colors, but of inert substance, depend for their dignity and pleasurableness, in the utmost degree, upon the vivid expression of the intellectual life which has been concerned in their production.

It is no sign of deadness in a present art that it borrows or imitates, but only if it borrows without paying interest, or if it imitates without choice. The art of a great nation, which is developed without any acquaintance with nobler examples than its own early efforts furnish, exhibits always the most consistent and comprehensible growth, and perhaps is regarded usually as peculiarly venerable in its self-origination. But there is something to my mind more majestic yet in the life of an architecture like that of the Lombards, rude and infantine in itself, and surrounded by fragments of a nobler art of which it is quick in admiration, and ready in imitation, and yet so strong in its own new instincts that it re-constructs and re-arranges every fragment that it copies or borrows into harmony with its own thoughts,—a harmony at first disjointed and awkward, but completed in the end, and fused into perfect organization; all the borrowed elements being subordinated to its own primal, unchanged life.

Two very distinguishing characters of vital imitation are, its Frankness and its Audacity; its Frankness is especially

singular; there is never any effort to conceal the degree of the sources of its borrowing. Raffaelle carries off a whole figure from Masaccio, or borrows an entire composition from Perugino, with as much tranquillity and simplicity of innocence as a young Spartan pickpocket; and the architect of a Romanesque basilica gathered his columns and his capitals where he could find them, as an ant picks up sticks.

Frankness, however, is in itself no excuse for repetition, nor Audacity for innovation, when the one is indolent and the other unwise.

I believe the right question to ask, respecting all ornament, is simply this: Was it done with enjoyment—was the carver happy while he was about it? It may be the hardest work possible, and the harder because so much pleasure was taken in it; but it must have been happy too or it will not be living.

We have certain work to do for our bread, and that is to be done strenuously; other work to do for our delight, and that is to be done heartily; neither is to be done by halves or shifts, but with a will; and what is not worth this effort is not to be done at all. There is dreaming enough, and earthiness enough, and sensuality enough in human existence, without our turning the few glowing moments of it into mechanism; and since our life must at the best be but a vapor that appears but for a little time and then vanishes away, let it at least appear as a cloud in the height of Heaven, not as the thick darkness that broods over the blast of the Furnace, and rolling of the Wheel.

## VI.—THE LAMP OF MEMORY.

As the centralisation and protectress of Memory and Association, Architecture is to be regarded by us with the most serious thought. We may live without her, and worship without her, but we cannot remember without her. How cold is all history, how lifeless all imagery, compared to that which the living nation writes, and the uncorrupted marble bears! How many pages of doubtful record might we not often spare, for a few stones left one upon another? The ambition of the old Babel-builders was well directed for this world. There are but two strong conquerors of the forgetfulness of men, Poetry and Architecture; and the latter in some sort includes the former, and is mightier in its reality. It is well to have, not only what men have thought and felt, but what their hands have handled and their strength wrought, and their eyes beheld, all the days of their life. The age of Homer is surrounded with darkness, his very personality with doubt. Not so that of Pericles; and the day is coming when we shall confess we have learned more of Greece out of the crumbled fragments of her sculpture than even from her sweet singers or soldier historians. And if indeed there be any profit in our knowledge of the past, or any joy in the thought of being remembered hereafter, which can give strength to present exertion, or patience to present endurance, there are two duties respecting national Architecture whose importance it is impossible to overrate; the first to render the Architecture of the day historical; and the second, to preserve, as the most precious of inheritances, that of past ages. It is in becoming memorial or monumental that a true perfection is attained by civil and domestic buildings.

As regards domestic buildings, there must always be a cer

tain limitation to views of this kind in the power as well as in the hearts of men; still I cannot but think it an evil sign of a people when their houses are built to last but one generation only. There is a sanctity in a good man's house which cannot be renewed in every tenement that rises on its ruins; and I believe that good men would generally feel this; and that having spent their lives happily and honorably, they would be grieved at the close of them to think that the place of their earthly abode, which had seen, and seemed almost to sympathise in all their honor, their gladness, or their suffering,—that this, with all the record it bare of them, and all of material things that they had loved and ruled over, and set the stamp of themselves upon, was to be swept away, as soon as there was room for them made in the grave; that no respect was to be shown to it, no affection felt for it, no good to be drawn from it by their children; that though there was a monument in the church, there was no warm monument in the hearth and house to them; that all that they ever treasured was despised, and the places that had sheltered them were dragged down to the dust. I say that a good man would fear this; and that, far more, a good son, a noble descendant, would fear doing it to his father's house. If men lived like men indeed, their houses would be temples—which we should hardly dare to injure, and in which it would make us holy to be permitted to live; and there must be a strange dissolution of natural affection, a strange unthankfulness for all that homes have given and parents taught, a strange consciousness that we have been unfaithful to our fathers' honor, or that our own lives are not such as would make our dwellings sacred to our children, when each man would fain build to himself, and build for the little revolution of his own life only.

When men do not love their hearths, nor reverence their

thresholds, it is a sign that they have dishonored both. Our God is a household God, as well as a heavenly one; He has an altar in every man's dwelling; let men look to it when they rend it lightly, and pour out its ashes.

It would be better if, in every possible instance, men built their own houses on a scale commensurate rather with their condition at the commencement, than their attainments at the termination of their worldly career; and built them to stand as long as human work, at its strongest, can be hoped to stand, recording to their children what they have been, and from what, if so it had been permitted them, they had risen.

I would have, then, our ordinary dwelling-houses *built to last*, and built to be lovely; as rich and full of pleasantness as may be, within and without, and with such differences as might suit and express each man's character and occupation, and partly his history.

In public buildings the historical purpose should be still more definite. Better the rudest work that tells a story or records a fact, than the richest without meaning. There should not be a single ornament put upon great civic buildings, without some intellectual intention. It is one of the advantages of gothic architecture, that it admits of a richness of record altogether unlimited.

Every human action gains in honor, in grace, in all true magnificence, by its regard to things that are to come. It is the far sight, the quiet and confident patience, that, above all other attributes, separate man from man, and near him to his Maker; and there is no action nor art, whose majesty we may not measure by this test. Therefore, when we build, let us think that we build (public edifices) for ever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come

when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them, "See! this our fathers did for us." For, indeed, the greatest glory of a building is not in its stones, or in its gold. Its glory is in its *age*, and in that deep sense of voicefulness, of stern watching, of mysterious sympathy, nay, even of approval or condemnation, which we feel in walls that have long been washed by the passing waves of humanity.

## VII.—THE LAMP OF OBEDIENCE.

It has been my endeavor to show how every form of noble architecture is in some sort the embodiment of the Polity, Life, History, and Religious Faith of nations. Once or twice in doing this, I have named a principle to which I would now assign a definite place among those which direct that embodiment;—the crowning grace of all the rest: that principle to which Polity owes its stability, Life its happiness, Faith its acceptance, Creation its continuance,—Obedience.

How false is the conception, how frantic the pursuit, of that treacherous phantom which men call Liberty! There is no such thing in the universe. There can never be. The stars have it not; the earth has it not; the sea has it not; and we men have the mockery and semblance of it only for our heaviest punishment.

The enthusiast would reply that by Liberty he meant the Law of Liberty. Then why use the single and misunderstood word? If by liberty you mean chastisement of the passions,

discipline of the intellect, subjection of the will; if you mean the fear of inflicting, the shame of committing a wrong; if you mean respect for all who are in authority, and consideration for all who are in dependence; veneration for the good, mercy to the evil, sympathy with the weak;—if you mean, in a word, that Service which is defined in the liturgy of the English church to be "perfect Freedom," why do you name this by the same word by which the luxurious mean license, and the reckless mean change;—by which the rogue means rapine, and the fool, equality; by which the proud mean anarchy, and the malignant mean violence? Call it by any name rather than this, but its best and truest test is, Obedience.

Obedience is, indeed, founded on a kind of freedom, else it would become mere *subjugation*, but that freedom is only granted that obedience may be more perfect.

If there be any one condition which, in watching the progress of Architecture, we see distinct and general, it is this; that the architecture of a nation is great only when it is as universal and as established as its language; and when provincial differences of style are nothing more than so many dialects. Other necessities are matters of doubt: nations have been alike successful in their architecture in times of poverty and of wealth; in times of war and of peace; in times of barbarism and of refinement; under governments the most liberal or the most arbitrary; but this one condition has been constant, this one requirement clear in all places and at all times, that the work shall be that of a *school*, that no individual caprice shall dispense with, or materially vary, accepted types and customary decorations; and that from the cottage to the palace, and from the chapel to the basilica, and from the garden fence to the fortress wall, every member and feature of the architecture of the nation shall be as commonly current, as frankly accepted, as its language or its coin.

A day never passes without our hearing our English architects called upon to be original, and to invent a *new style:* About as sensible and necessary an exhortation as to ask a man who has never had rags on his back to keep out cold, to invent a new mode of cutting a coat. Give him a whole coat first, and let him concern himself about the fashion of it afterwards. We want no *new* style of architecture. Who wants a new style of painting or sculpture? But we want *some* style. It is of marvellously little importance, if we have a code of laws and they be good laws, whether they be new or old, foreign or native, Roman or Saxon, or Norman or English laws. But it is of considerable importance that we should have a code of laws of one kind or another, and that code accepted and enforced from one side of the island to the other, and not one law made ground of judgment at York and another at Exeter.

There seems to me to be a wonderful misunderstanding among the majority of architects at the present day, as to the very nature and meaning of Originality, and of all wherein it consists. Originality in expression does not depend on invention of new words; nor originality in poetry on invention of new measures; nor, in painting, on invention of new colors, or new modes of using them. The chords of music, the harmonies of color, the general principles of the arrangement of sculptural masses, have been determined long ago, and, in all probability, cannot be added to any more than they can be altered.

A man who has the gift, will take up any style that is going, the style of his day, and will work in that, and be great in that, and make everything that he does in it look as fresh as if every thought of it had just come down from heaven. I do not say that he will not take liberties with his materials, or with his rules. I do not say that strange changes will not sometimes be wrought by his efforts, or his fancies, in both.

But those changes will be instructive, natural, facile, though sometimes marvellous; and those liberties will be like the liberties that a great speaker takes with the language, not a defiance of its rules for the sake of singularity, but inevitable, uncalculated, and brilliant consequences of an effort to express what the language, without such infraction, could not.

I know too well the undue importance which the study that every man follows must assume in his own eyes, to trust my own impressions of the dignity of that of Architecture; and yet I think I cannot be utterly mistaken in regarding it as at least useful in the sense of a National employment. I am confirmed in this impression by what I see passing among the states of Europe at this instant. All the horror, distress, and tumult which oppress the foreign nations, are traceable, among the other *secondary causes* through which God is working out His will upon them, to the simple one of their not having enough to do. I am not blind to the distress among their operatives; nor do I deny the nearer and visibly active causes of the movement: the recklessness of villany in the leaders of revolt, the absence of common moral principle in the upper classes, and of common courage and honesty in the heads of governments. But these causes are ultimately traceable to a deeper and simpler one; the recklessness of the demagogue, the immorality of the middle class, and the effeminacy and treachery of the noble, are traceable in all these nations to the commonest and most fruitful cause of calamity in households—Idleness.

We think too much in our benevolent efforts, more multiplied and more vain day by day, of bettering men by giving them advice and instruction. There are few who will take either; the chief thing they need is occupation. I do not mean work in the sense of bread—I mean work in the sense of *mental interest*; for those who either are placed above the

necessity of labor for their bread, or who will not work although they should.

There are multitudes of idle semi-gentlemen who ought to be shoemakers and carpenters. It is of no use to tell them they are fools, and that they will only make themselves miserable in the end as well as others; if they have nothing else to do, they will do mischief; and the man who will not work, and has no means of intellectual pleasure, is as sure to become an instrument of evil as if he had sold himself bodily to Satan.

It would be wise to consider whether the forms of employment which we chiefly adopt or promote, are as well calculated as they might be to improve and elevate us.

I have paused, not once nor twice, as I wrote, and often have checked the course of what might otherwise have been importunate persuasion, as the thought has crossed me, how soon all Architecture may be vain, except that which is "not made with hands."

All European architecture, bad and good, old and new, is derived from Greece through Rome, and colored and perfected from the East. The history of Architecture is nothing but the tracing of the various modes and directions of this derivation. The Doric and the Corinthian orders are the roots, the one of all Romanesque, massy-capitaled buildings—Norman, Lombard, Byzantine, and what else you can name of the kind; and the Corinthian of all Gothic, early-English, French, German, and Tuscan. Now observe: those old Greeks gave the shaft: Rome gave the arch; the Arabs pointed and foliated the arch. The shaft and arch, the frame-work and strength of architecture, are from the race of Japheth: the spirituality and sanctity of it from Ismael, Abraham, and Shem.

I have said that the two orders, Doric and Corinthian, are the roots of all European architecture. You have, perhaps,

heard of five orders: but there are only two real orders; and there never can be any more till doomsday. On one of these orders the ornament is convex: those are Doric, Norman, and what else you recollect of the kind. On the other the ornament is concave; those are Corinthian, Early English, Decorated, and what else you recollect of that kind.

The work of the Lombard was to give hardihood and system to the enervated body and enfeebled mind of Christendom; that of the Arab was to punish idolatry, and to proclaim the spirituality of worship. The Lombard covered every church which he built with the sculptured representations of bodily exercises—hunting and war. The Arab banished all imagination of creature form from his temples, and proclaimed from their minarets, "There is no god but God." Opposite in their character and mission, alike in their magnificence of energy, they came from the North and from the South, the glacier torrent and the lava stream; they met and contended over the wreck of the Roman empire; and the very centre of the struggle, the point of pause of both, the deadwater of the opposite eddies, charged with embayed fragments of the Roman wreck, is VENICE.

The Ducal Palace of Venice contains the three elements in exactly equal proportions—the Roman, Lombard, and Arab. It is the central building of the world.

Now Venice, as she was once the most religious, was in her fall the most corrupt, of European states; and as she was in her strength the centre of the pure currents of Christian architecture, so she is in her decline the source of the Renaissance.

Come, then, if truths such as these are worth our thoughts; come, and let us know, before we enter the streets of the Sea City, whether we are indeed to submit ourselves to their undistinguished enchantment, and to look upon the last changes which were wrought on the lifted forms of her palaces, as we should on the capricious towering of summer clouds in the

sunset, ere they sank into the deep of night; or whether, rather, we shall not behold in the brightness of their accumulated marble, pages on which the sentence of her luxury was to be written until the waves should efface it, as they fulfilled —"God has numbered thy kingdom, and finished it."

Since the first dominion of men was asserted over the *ocean*, three thrones, of mark beyond all others, have been set upon its sands: the thrones of Tyre, Venice, and England. Of the first of these great powers only the memory remains; of the second, the ruin; the third, which inherits their greatness, if it forget their example, may be led through prouder eminence to less pitied destruction.

The exaltation, the sin, and the punishment of Tyre, have been recorded for us, in perhaps the most touching words ever uttered by the Prophets of Israel against the cities of the stranger. But we read them as a lovely song; and close our ears to the sternness of their warning; for the very depth of the fall of Tyre has blinded us to its reality, and we forget, as we watch the bleaching of the rocks between the sunshine and the sea, that they were once "as in Eden, the garden of God."

Her successor, like her in perfection of beauty, though less in endurance of dominion, is still left for our beholding in the final period of her decline: a ghost upon the sands of the sea, so weak—so quiet,—so bereft of all but her loveliness, that we might well doubt, as we watched her faint reflection in the mirage of the lagoon, which was the City, and which the Shadow. A warning seems to me to be uttered by every one of the fast-gaining waves, that beat like passing bells against the stones of Venice.

The state of Venice existed thirteen hundred and seventy-six years. Of this period two hundred and seventy-six years were passed in a nominal subjection to the cities of old

Venetia, and in an agitated form of democracy. For six hundred years, during which the power of Venice was continually on the increase, her government was an elective monarchy, her king or Doge possessing, in early times at least, as much independent authority as any other European sovereign; but an authority gradually subjected to limitation, and shortened almost daily of its prerogatives, while it increased in a spectral and incapable magnificence. The final government of the nobles, under the image of a king, lasted for five hundred years, during which Venice reaped the fruits of her former energies, consumed them,—and expired.

Throughout her career, the victories of Venice, and at many periods of it, her safety, were purchased by individual heroism; and the man who exalted or saved her was sometimes her king, sometimes a noble, sometimes a citizen.

The most curious phenomenon in all Venetian history, is the vitality of religion in private life, and its deadness in public policy. Amidst the enthusiasm, chivalry, or fanaticism of the other states of Europe, Venice stands, from first to last, like a masked statue; her coldness impenetrable, her exertion only aroused by the touch of a secret spring. That spring was her *commercial interest*,—this the one motive of all her important political acts, or enduring national animosities. She could forgive insults to her honor, but never rivalship in her commerce. She calculated the glory of her conquests by their value, and estimated their justice by their facility.

There are, therefore, two strange and solemn lights in which we have to regard almost every scene in the fitful history of the Rivo Alto. We find, on the one hand, a deep and constant tone of individual religion characterizing the lives of the citizens of Venice in her greatness; we find this spirit influencing them in all the familiar and immediate concerns of life, giving a peculiar dignity to the conduct even of

their commercial transactions, and confessed by them with a simplicity of faith that may well put to shame the hesitation with which a man of the world at present admits (even if it be so in reality,) that religious feeling has any influence over the minor branches of his conduct. With the fulness of this spirit the prosperity of the state is exactly correspondent, and with its failure her decline.

There is another most interesting feature in the policy of Venice, namely, the magnificent and successful struggle which she maintained against the *temporal authority* of the Church of Rome.

One more circumstance remains to be noted respecting the Venetian government, the singular unity of the families composing it,—unity far from sincere or perfect, but still admirable when contrasted with the fiery feuds, the almost daily revolutions, which fill the annals of the other states of Italy. Venice may well call upon us to note with reverence, that of all the towers which are still seen rising, like a branchless forest, from her islands, there is but one whose office was other than that of summoning to prayer, and that one was a watchtower only.

The Venice of Modern fiction and drama is a thing of yesterday, a mere efflorescence of decay, a stage-dream which the first ray of daylight must dissipate into dust. No prisoner, whose name is worth remembering, or whose sorrow deserved sympathy, ever crossed that "Bridge of Sighs," which is the centre of the Byronic ideal of Venice; no great Merchant of Venice ever saw that Rialto under which the traveller now passes with breathless interest: the statue, which Byron makes Faliero address as one of his great ancestors, was erected to a soldier of fortune a hundred and fifty years after Faliero's death; and the most conspicuous parts of the city have been so entirely altered in the course

of the last three centuries, that if Henry Dandolo or Francis Foscari could be summoned from their tombs, and stood each on the deck of his galley, at the entrance of the Grand Canal, that renowned entrance, the painter's favorite subject, the novelist's favorite scene, where the water first narrows by the steps of the church of La Salute—the mighty Doges would not know in what spot of the world they stood, would literally not recognise one stone of the great city, for whose sake and by whose ingratitude their grey hairs had been brought down with bitterness to the grave. The remains of *their* Venice lie hidden behind the cumbrous masses which were the delight of the nation in its dotage; hidden in many a grass-grown court, and silent pathway, and lightless canal, where the slow waves have sapped their foundations for five hundred years, and must soon prevail over them for ever. It must be our task to glean and gather them forth, and restore out of them some faint image of the lost city; more gorgeous a thousand fold, than that which now exists, yet not created in the day-dream of the prince, nor by the ostentation of the noble, but built by iron hands and patient hearts, contending against the adversity of nature and the fury of man, so that its wonderfulness cannot be grasped by the indolence of imagination, but only after frank inquiry into the true nature of that wild and solitary scene, whose restless tide and trembling sands did, indeed, shelter the birth of the city, but long denied her dominion.

It is enough for us to know that from the mouths of the Adige to those of the Piave there stretches, at a variable distance of from three to five miles from the actual shore, a bank of sand, divided into long islands by narrow channels of sea. The space between this bank and the true shore consists of the sedimentary deposits from these and other rivers, a great plain of calcareous mud, covered, in the neighborhood of Venice,

by the sea at high water, to the depth in most places of a foot or a foot and a half, and nearly everywhere exposed at low tide, but divided by an intricate network of narrow and winding channels, from which the sea never retires. In some places, according to the run of the currents, the land has risen into marshy islets, consolidated, some by art and some by time, into ground firm enough to be built upon, or fruitful enough to be cultivated; in others, on the contrary, it has not reached the sea level; so that, at the average low water, shallow lakelets glitter among its irregularly-exposed fields of seaweed. In the midst of the largest of these, increased in importance by the confluence of several large river channels towards one of the openings in the sea bank, the city of Venice itself is built, on a crowded cluster of islands.

If, two thousand years ago, we had been permitted to see the slow settling of the slime of those turbid waters into the polluted sea, and the gaining upon its deep and fresh waters of the lifeless, impassable, unvoyageable plain, how little could we have understood the purpose with which those islands were shaped out of the void, and the torpid waters enclosed with their desolate walls of sand! How little could we have known, any more than of what now seems to us most distressful, dark, and objectless, the glorious aim which was then in the mind of Him in whose hand are all the corners of the earth! how little imagined that in the laws which were stretching forth the gloomy mud of those fruitless banks, and feeding the bitter grass among their shallows, there was indeed a preparation, and *the only preparation possible*, for the founding of a city which was to be set like a golden clasp on the girdle of the earth, to write her history on the white scrolls of the sea-surges, and to word it in their thunder, and to gather and give forth, in the world-wide pulsation, the glory of the West and of the East, from the burning heart of her Fortitude and Splendor.

The vast town of St. Mark seems to lift itself visibly forth from the level field of chequered stones; and, on each side, the countless arches prolong themselves into ranged symmetry, as if the rugged and irregular houses that pressed together above us in the dark alley had been struck back into sudden obedience and lovely order, and all their rude casements and broken walls had been transformed into arches charged with goodly sculpture, and fluted shafts of delicate stone.

And well may they fall back, for beyond those troops of ordered arches there rises a vision out of the earth, and all the great square seems to have opened from it in a kind of awe, that we may see it far away;—a multitude of pillars and white domes, clustered into a long low pyramid of colored light; a treasure-heap, it seems, partly of gold, and partly of opal, and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted porches, ceiled with fair mosaic, and beset with sculpture of alabaster, clear as amber and delicate as ivory,—sculpture fantastic and involved, of palm leaves and lilies, and grapes and pomegranates, and birds clinging and fluttering among the branches, all twined together into an endless network of buds and plumes; and, in the midst of it, the solemn form of angels, sculptured, and robed to the feet, and leaning to each other across the gates, their figures indistinct among the gleaming of the golden ground through the leaves beside them, interrupted and dim, like the morning light as it faded among the branches of Eden, when first its gates were angel-guarded long ago. And round the walls of the porches there are set pillars of variegated stones, jasper and porphyry, and deep-green serpentine spotted with flakes of snow, and marbles, that half refuse and half yield to the sunshine, Cleopatra-like, "their bluest veins to kiss"—the shadow, as it steals back from them, revealing line after line of azure undulation, as a receding tide leaves the waved sand; their capitals rich

with interwoven tracery, rooted knots of herbage, and drifting leaves of acanthus and vine, and mystical signs, all beginning and ending in the Cross; and above them, in the broad archivolts, a continuous chain of language and of life—angels, and the signs of heaven, and the labors of men, each in its appointed season upon the earth; and above these, another range of glittering pinnacles, mixed with white arches edged with scarlet flowers,—a confusion of delight, amidst which the breasts of the Greek horses are seen blazing in their breadth of golden strength, and the St. Mark's Lion, lifted on a blue field covered with stars, until at last, as if in ecstasy, the crests of the arches break into a marble foam, and toss themselves far into the blue sky in flashes and wreaths of sculptured spray, as if the breakers on the Lido shore had been frost-bound before they fell, and the sea nymphs had inlaid them with coral and amethyst.

Between that grim cathedral of England and this, what an interval! There is a type of it in the very birds that haunt them; for, instead of the restless crowd, hoarse-voiced and sable-winged, drifting on the black upper air, the St. Mark's porches are full of doves, that nestle among the marble foliage, and mingle the soft iridescence of their living plumes, changing at every motion, with the tints, hardly less lovely, that have stood unchanged for seven hundred years.

And what effect has this splendor on those who pass beneath it? You may walk from sunrise to sunset, to and fro, before the gateway of St. Mark's, and you will not see an eye lifted to it, nor a countenance brightened by it. Priest and layman, soldier and civilian, rich and poor, pass by it alike regardless. Up to the very recesses of the porches, the meanest tradesmen of the city push their counters; nay, the foundations of its pillars are themselves the seats—not "of them that sell doves" for sacrifice, but of the vendors of toys and caricatures.

Round the whole square in front of the church, there is almost a continuous line of cafés, where the idle Venetians of the middle classes lounge, and read empty journals; in its centre the Austrian bands play during the time of vespers, their martial music jarring with the organ notes,—the march drowning the miserere, and the sullen crowd thickening around them —a crowd, which, if it had its will, would stiletto every soldier that pipes to it. And in the recesses of the porches, all day long, knots of men of the lowest classes, unemployed and listless, lie basking in the sun like lizards; and unregarded children—every heavy glance of their young eyes full of desperation and stony depravity, and their throats hoarse with cursing—gamble, and fight, and snarl, and sleep, hour after hour, clashing their bruised centesimi upon the marble ledges of the church porch. And the images of Christ and his angels look down upon it continually.

Let us enter the church itself. It is lost in still deeper twilight, to which the eye must be accustomed for some moments before the form of the building can be traced; and then there opens before us a vast cave, hewn out into the form of a cross, and divided into shadowy aisles by many pillars. Round the domes of its roof the light enters only through narrow apertures like large stars; and here and there a ray or two from some far-away casement wanders into the darkness, and casts a narrow phosphoric stream upon the waves of marble that heave and fall in a thousand colors along the floor. What else there is of light is from torches, or silver lamps, burning carelessly in the recesses of the chapels; the roof sheeted with gold, and the polished wall covered with alabaster, give at every curve and angle some feeble gleaming to the flames; and the glories around the heads of the sculptured saints flash upon us as we pass them, and sink into the gloom. Under

foot and over head a continual succession of crowded imagery, one picture passing into another, as in a dream; forms beautiful and terrible mixed together, dragons and serpents, and ravening beasts of prey, and graceful birds that in the midst of them drink from running fountains and feed from vases of crystal; the passions and the pleasures of human life symbolised together, and the mystery of its redemption; for the mazes of interwoven lines and changeful pictures lead always at least to the Cross, lifted and carved in every place and upon every stone; sometimes with the serpent of eternity wrapt around it, sometimes with doves against its arms, and sweet herbage growing forth from its feet; but conspicuous most of all on the great rood that crosses the church before the altar, raised in bright blazonry against the shadow of the apse. And although in the recesses of the aisles and chapels, when the mist of the incense hangs heavily, we may see continually a figure traced in faint lines upon their marble, a woman standing with her eyes raised to heaven, and the inscription above her, "Mother of God;" she is not here the presiding deity. It is the Cross that is first seen, and always burning in the centre of the temple; and the hollow of its roof has the figure of Christ in the utmost height of it, raised in power, or returning in judgment.

The third cupola, that over the altar, represents the witness of the Old Testament to Christ, showing him enthroned in its centre, and surrounded by the patriarchs and prophets. But this dome was little seen by the people; their contemplation was intended to be chiefly drawn to that of the centre of the church, and thus the mind of the worshipper was at once fixed on the main groundwork and hope of Christianity,—"Christ is risen," and "Christ shall come." If he had time to explore the minor lateral chapels and cupolas, he could find in them the whole series of New Testament history, the

events of the Life of Christ, and the apostolic miracles in their order, and finally, the scenery of the Book of Revelation; but if he only entered, as often the common people do this hour, snatching a few moments before beginning the labor of the day to offer up an ejaculatory prayer, and advanced but from the main entrance as far as the altar screen, all the splendor of the glittering nave and variegated dome, if they smote upon his heart, as they might often, in strange contrast with his reed cabin among the shallows of the lagoon, smote upon it only that they might proclaim the two great messages—"Christ is risen," and "Christ shall come." Daily, as the white cupolas rose like wreaths of sea-foam in the dawn, while the shadowy campanile and frowning palace were still withdrawn into the night, they rose with the Easter Voice of Triumph,—"Christ is risen;" and daily, as they looked down upon the tumult of the people, deepening and eddying in the wide square that opened from their feet to the sea, they uttered above them the sentence of warning,—"Christ shall come."

And this thought may surely dispose the reader to look with some change of temper upon the gorgeous building and wild blazonry of that shrine of St. Mark's. He now perceives that it was in the hearts of the old Venetian people far more than a place of worship. It was at once a type of the Redeemed Church of God, and a scroll for the written word of God. It was to be to them both an image of the Bride, all glorious within, her clothing of wrought gold; and the actual Table of the Law and the Testimony, written within and without. And whether honored as the Church or as the Bible, was it not fitting that neither the gold nor the crystal should be spared in the adornment of it; that, as the symbol of the Bride, the building of the wall thereof should be of jasper, and the foundations of it garnished with all man

ner of precious stones; and that, as the channel of the Word, that triumphant utterance of the Psalmist should be true of it,—"I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches?" And shall we not look with changed temper down the long perspective of St. Mark's Place towards the sevenfold gates and glowing domes of its temple, when we know with what solemn purpose the shafts of it were lifted above the pavement of the populous square? Men met there from all countries of the earth, for traffic or for pleasure; but, above the crowd swaying for ever to and fro in the restlessness of avarice or thirst of delight, was seen perpetually the glory of the temple, attesting to them, whether they would hear or whether they would forbear, that there was one treasure which the merchantman might buy without a price, and one delight better than all others, in the word and the statutes of God.

Not in the wantonness of wealth, not in vain ministry to the desire of the eyes or the pride of life, were those marbles hewn into transparent strength, and those arches arrayed in the colors of the iris. There is a message written in the dyes of them, that once was written in blood; and a sound in the echoes of their vaults, that one day shall fill the vault of heaven,—"He shall return, to do judgment and justice." The strength of Venice was given her, so long as she remembered this: her destruction found her when she had forgotten this; and it found her irrevocably, because she forgot it without excuse. Never had city a more glorious Bible. Among the nations of the North, a rude and shadowy sculpture filled their temples with confused and hardly legible imagery; but, for her, the skill and the treasures of the East had gilded every letter, and illumined every page, till the Book-Temple shone from afar off like the star of the Magi. In other cities, the meetings of the people were often in places withdrawn from

religious association, subject to violence and to change; and on the grass of the dangerous rampart, and in the dust of the troubled street, there were deeds done and counsels taken, which, if we cannot justify, we may sometimes forgive. But the sins of Venice, whether in her palace or in her piazza, were done with the Bible at her right hand. The walls on which its testimony was written were separated but by a few inches of marble from those which guarded the secrets of her councils, or confined the victims of her policy. And when in her last hours she threw off all shame and all restraint, and the great square of the city became filled with the madness of the whole earth, be it remembered how much her sin was greater, because it was done in the face of the House of God, burning with the letters of His Law. Mountebank and masquer laughed their laugh, and went their way; and a silence has followed them, not unforetold; for amidst them all, through century after century of gathering vanity and festering guilt, the white dome of St. Mark's had uttered in the dead ear of Venice, "Know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment."

Such, then, was that first and fairest Venice which rose out of the barrenness of the lagoon, and the sorrow of her people; a city of graceful arcades and gleaming walls, veined with azure and warm with gold, and fretted with white sculpture like frost upon forest branches turned to marble. And yet, in this beauty of her youth, she was no city of thoughtless pleasure. There was still a sadness of heart upon her, and a depth of devotion, in which lay all her strength. I do not insist upon the probable religious signification of many of the sculptures which are now difficult of interpretation; but the temper which made the cross the principal ornament of every building is not to be misunderstood, nor can we fail to perceive, in many of the minor sculptural subjects, meanings

perfectly familiar to the mind of early Christianity. The peacock, used in preference to every other kind of bird, is the well known symbol of the resurrection; and, when drinking from a fountain or from a font, is, I doubt not, also a type of the new life received in faithful baptism. The vine, used in preference to all other trees, was equally recognised as, in all cases, a type either of Christ Himself or of those who were in a state of visible or professed union with Him. The dove, at its foot, represents the coming of the Comforter; and even the groups of contending animals had, probably, a distinct and universally apprehended reference to the powers of evil. But I lay no stress on these more occult meanings. The principal circumstance which marks the seriousness of the early Venetian mind is perhaps the last in which the reader would suppose it was traceable;—that love of bright and pure color which, in a modified form, was afterwards the root of all the triumph of the Venetian schools of painting, but which, in its utmost simplicity, was characteristic of the Byzantine period only; and of which, therefore, in the close of our review of that period, it will be well that we should truly estimate the significance. The fact is, we none of us enough appreciate the nobleness and sacredness of color. Nothing is more common than to hear it spoken of as a subordinate beauty,—nay, even as the mere source of a sensual pleasure; and we might almost believe that we were daily among men who

> "Could strip, for aught the prospect yields
> To them, their verdure from the fields;
> And take the radiance from the clouds
> With which the sun his setting shrouds."

But it is not so. Such expressions are used for the most part in thoughtlessness; and if the speakers would only take the pains to imagine what the world and their own existence

would become, if the blue were taken from the sky, and the gold from the sunshine, and the verdure from the leaves, and the crimson from the blood which is the life of man, the flush from the cheek, the darkness from the eye, the radiance from the hair,—if they could but see, for an instant, white human creatures living in a white world,—they would soon feel what they owe to color. The fact is, that of all God's gifts to the sight of man, color is the holiest, the most divine, the most solemn. We speak rashly of gay color and sad color, for color cannot at once be good and gay. All good color is in some degree pensive, the loveliest is melancholy, and the purest and most thoughtful minds are those which love color the most.

I know that this will sound strange in many ears, and will be especially startling to those who have considered the subject chiefly with reference to painting; for the great Venetian schools of color are not usually understood to be either pure or pensive, and the idea of its pre-eminence is associated in nearly every mind with the coarseness of Rubens, and the sensualities of Correggio and Titian. But a more comprehensive view of art will soon correct this impression. It will be discovered, in the first place, that the more faithful and earnest the religion of the painter, the more pure and prevalent is the system of his color. It will be found, in the second place, that where color becomes a primal intention with a painter otherwise mean or sensual, it instantly elevates him, and becomes the one sacred and saving element in his work. The very depth of the stoop to which the Venetian painters and Rubens sometimes condescend, is a consequence of their feeling confidence in the power of their color to keep them from falling. They hold on by it, as by a chain let down from heaven, with one hand, though they may sometimes seem to gather dust and ashes with the other. And, in the last place,

it will be found that so surely as a painter is irreligious, thoughtless, or obscene in disposition, so surely is his coloring cold, gloomy, and valueless. The opposite poles of art in this respect are Frà Angelico and Salvator Rosa; of whom the one was a man who smiled seldom, wept often, prayed constantly, and never harbored an impure thought. His pictures are simply so many pieces of jewellery, the colors of the draperies being perfectly pure, as various as those of a painted window, chastened only by paleness, and relieved upon a gold ground. Salvator was a dissipated jester and satirist, a man who spent his life in masquing and revelry. But his pictures are full of horror, and their color is for the most part gloomy-grey. Truly, it would seem as if art had so much of eternity in it, that it must take its dye from the close rather than the course of life. "In such laughter the heart of man is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness."

These are no singular instances. I know no law more severely without exception than this of the connexion of pure color with profound and noble thought. The late Flemish pictures, shallow in conception and obscure in subject, are always sombre in color. But the early religious painting of the Flemings is as brilliant in hue as it is holy in thought. The Bellinis, Francias, Peruginos, painted in crimson, and blue, and gold. The Caraccis, Guidos, and Rembrandts in brown and grey. The builders of our great cathedrals veiled their casements and wrapped their pillars with one robe of purple splendor. The builders of the luxurious Renaissance left their palaces filled only with cold white light, and in the paleness of their native stone.

Nor does it seem difficult to discern a noble reason for this universal law. In that heavenly circle which binds the statutes of color upon the front of the sky, when it became the sign of the covenant of peace, the pure hues of divided light were

sanctified to the human heart for ever; nor this, it would seem, by mere arbitrary appointment, but in consequence of the fore-ordained and marvellous constitution of those hues into a sevenfold, or, more strictly still, a threefold order, typical of the Divine nature itself.

The whole church of St. Mark's was a great Book of Common Prayer, the mosaics were its illuminations, and the common people of the time were taught their scripture history by means of them, more impressively perhaps, though far less fully, than ours are now by scripture reading. They had no other bible—and Protestants do not often enough consider this—could have no other. We find it somewhat difficult to furnish our poor with printed bibles; consider what the difficulty must have been when they could be given only in manuscript. The walls of the church necessarily became the poor man's Bible, and a picture was more easily read upon the walls than a chapter.

## GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE.

We all have some notion, most of us a very determined one, of the meaning of the term Gothic; but I know that many persons have this idea in their minds without being able to define it: that is to say, understanding generally that Westminster Abbey is Gothic, and St. Paul's is not, that Strasburgh Cathedral is Gothic and St. Peter's is not, they have, nevertheless, no clear notion of what it is that they recognise in one or miss in the other, such as would enable them to say how far the work at Westminster or Strasburgh is good and pure of its kind; still less to say of any nondescript building, like St. James's Palace or Windsor Castle, how much right Gothic element there is in it, and how much wanting. And I believe this inquiry to be a pleasant and profitable one; and that there will be found something more than usually interesting in trac-

ing out this grey, shadowy, many pinnacled image of the Gothic spirit within us; and discerning what fellowship there is between it and our Northern hearts. And if, at any point of the inquiry, I should interfere with any of the reader's previously formed conceptions, and use the term Gothic in any sense which he would not willingly attach to it, I do not ask him to accept, but only to examine and understand my interpretation, as necessary to the intelligibility of what follows.

We have, then, the Gothic character submitted to our analysis, just as the rough mineral is substituted to that of the chemist, entangled with many other foreign substances, itself perhaps in no place pure, or ever to be obtained or seen in purity for more than an instant; but nevertheless a thing of definite and separate nature, however inextricable or confused in appearance. Now observe: the chemist defines his mineral by two separate kinds of characters; one external, its crystalline form, hardness, lustre, &c.; the other, internal; the proportions and nature of its constituent atoms. Exactly in the same manner, we shall find that Gothic architecture has external forms, and internal elements. Its elements are certain mental tendencies of the builders, legibly expressed in it; as fancifulness, love of variety, love of richness, and such others. Its external forms are pointed arches, vaulted roofs, &c. And unless both the elements and the forms are there, we have no right to call the style Gothic. It is not enough that it has the Form, if it have not also the power and life. It is not enough that it has the Power, if it have not the form. We must therefore inquire into each of these characters successively; and determine, first, what is the Mental Expression, and secondly, what the Material Form, of Gothic Architecture, properly so called.

1st. Mental Power or Expression. What characters, we have to discover, did the Gothic builders love, or instinctively express in their work, as distinguished from all other builders?

Let us go back for a moment to our chemistry, and note that, in defining a mineral by its constituent parts, it is not one nor another of them that can make up the mineral, but the union of all: for instance, it is neither in charcoal, nor in oxygen, nor in lime, that there is the making of chalk, but in the combination of all three in certain measures; they are all found in very different things from chalk, and there is nothing like chalk either in charcoal or in oxygen, but they are nevertheless necessary to its existence.

So in various mental characters which make up the soul of Gothic. It is not one nor another that produces it, but their union in certain measures. Each one of them is found in many other architectures besides Gothic; but Gothic cannot exist where they are not found, or, at least, where their place is not in some way supplied. Only there is this great difference between the composition of the mineral, and of the architectural style, that if we withdraw one of its elements from the stone, its form is utterly changed, and its existence as such and such a mineral is destroyed; but if we withdraw one of its mental elements from the Gothic style, it is only a little less Gothic than it was before, and the union of two or three of its elements is enough already to bestow a certain Gothicness of character, which gains in intensity as we add the others, and loses as we again withdraw them.

I believe, then, that the characteristic or moral elements of Gothic are the following, placed in the order of their importance:

1. Savageness.
2. Changefulness.
3. Naturalism.
4. Grotesqueness.
5. Rigidity.
6. Redundance.

These characters are here expressed as belonging to the buildings; as belonging to the builder, they would be expressed thus:—1. Savageness or Rudeness. 2. Love of Change. 3. Love of Nature. 4. Disturbed Imagination. 5. Obstinacy. 6. Generosity. And I repeat, that the withdrawal of any one, or any two, will not at once destroy the Gothic character of a building, but the removal of a majority of them will.

I am not sure when the word "Gothic" was first generically applied to the architecture of the North; but I presume that, whatever the date of its original usage, it was intended to imply reproach, and express the barbaric character of the nations among whom that architecture arose. It never implied that they were literally of Gothic lineage, far less that their architecture had been originally invented by the Goths themselves; but it did imply that they and their buildings together exhibited a degree of sternness and rudeness which, in contradistinction to the character of Southern and Eastern nations, appeared like a perpetual reflection of the contrast between the Goth and Roman in their first encounter. And when that fallen Roman, in the utmost impotence of his luxury, and insolence of his guilt, became the model for the imitation of civilized Europe, at the close of the so-called Dark ages, the word Gothic became a term of unmitigated contempt, not unmixed with aversion. From that contempt, by the exertion of the antiquaries and architects of this century, Gothic architecture has been sufficiently vindicated; and perhaps some among us, in our admiration of the magnificent science of its structure and sacredness of its expression, might desire that the term of ancient reproach should be withdrawn, and some other, of more apparent honorableness, adopted in its place. There is no chance, as there is no need, of such a substitution. As far as the epithet was used scornfully, it was used falsely; but there is no reproach in the word rightly understood; on

the contrary, there is a profound truth, which the instinct of mankind almost unconsciously recognises.

It is true, greatly and deeply true, that the architecture of the North is rude and wild; but it is not true that, for this reason, we are to condemn it, or despise. Far otherwise: I believe it is in this very character that it deserves our profoundest reverence.

## THE GROTESQUE.

The grotesque which comes to all men in a disturbed dream, is the most intelligible example (of the error and wildness of the mental impressions caused by fear operating upon strong powers of imagination) but also the most ignoble; the imagination, in this instance, being entirely deprived of all aid from reason, and incapable of self-government. I believe, however, that the noblest forms of imaginative power are also in some sort ungovernable, and have in them something of the character of dreams; so that the vision, of whatever kind, comes uncalled, and will not submit itself to the seer, but conquers him, and forces him to speak as a prophet, having no power over his words or thoughts. Only, if the whole man be trained perfectly, and his mind calm, consistent, and powerful, the vision which comes to him is seen as in a perfect mirror, serenely, and in consistence with the rational powers; but if the mind be imperfect and ill trained, the vision is seen as in a broken mirror, with strange distortions and discrepancies, all the passions of the heart breathing upon it in cross ripples, till hardly a trace of it remains unbroken. So that, strictly speaking, the imagination is never governed; it is always the ruling and Divine power: and the rest of the man is to it only as an instrument which it sounds,

or a tablet on which it writes; clearly and sublimely if the wax be smooth and the strings true, grotesquely and wildly if they are stained and broken. And thus the "Iliad," the "Inferno," the "Pilgrim's Progress," the "Faërie Queen," are all of them true dreams; only the sleep of the men to whom they came was the deep, living sleep which God sends, with a sacredness in it as of death, the revealer of secrets.

Now observe in this matter, carefully, the difference between a dim mirror and a distorted one; and do not blame me for pressing the analogy too far, for it will enable me to explain my meaning every way more clearly. Most men's minds are dim mirrors, in which all truth is seen, as St. Paul tells us, darkly: this is the fault most common and most fatal; dulness of the heart and mistiness of sight, increasing to utter hardness and blindness; Satan breathing upon the glass, so that, if we do not sweep the mist laboriously away, it will take no image. But, even so far as we are able to do this, we have still the distortion to fear, yet not to the same extent, for we can in some sort allow for the distortion of an image, if only we can see it clearly. And the fallen human soul, at its best, must be as a diminishing glass, and that a broken one, to the mighty truths of the universe around it; and the wider the scope of its glance, and the vaster the truths into which it obtains an insight, the more fantastic their distortion is likely to be, as the winds and the vapors trouble the field of the telescope most when it reaches farthest.

It is not, however, in every symbolical subject that the fearful grotesque becomes embodied to the full. The element of distortion which affects the intellect when dealing with subjects above its proper capacity, is as nothing compared with that which it sustains from the direct impressions of terror. It is the trembling of the human soul in the presence of death which most of all disturbs the images on the intel-

lectual mirror, and invests them with the fitfulness and ghastliness of dreams. And from the contemplation of death, and of the pangs which follow his footsteps, arise in men's hearts the troop of strange and irresistible superstitions, which, more or less melancholy or majestic according to the dignity of the mind they impress, are yet never without a certain grotesqueness, following on the paralysis of the reason and over-excitement of the fancy. I do not mean to deny the actual existence of spiritual manifestations; I have never weighed the evidence upon the subject; but with these, if such exist, we are not here concerned. The grotesque which we are examining arises out of that condition of mind which appears to follow naturally upon the contemplation of death, and in which the fancy is brought into morbid action by terror, accompanied by the belief in spiritual presence, and in the possibility of spiritual apparition. Hence are developed its most sublime, because its least voluntary, creations, aided by the fearfulness of the phenomena of nature which are in any wise the ministers of death, and primarily directed by the peculiar ghastliness of expression in the skeleton, itself a species of terrible grotesque in its relation to the perfect human frame.

Thus, first born from the dusty and dreadful whiteness of the charnel house, but softened in their forms by the holiest of human affections, went forth the troop of wild and wonderful images, seen through tears, that had the mastery over our Northern hearts for so many ages. The powers of sudden destruction lurking in the woods and waters, in the rocks and clouds;—kelpie and gnome, Lurlei and Hartz spirits; the wraith and foreboding phantom; the spectra of second sight; the various conceptions of avenging or tormented ghost, haunting the perpetrator of crime, or expiating its commission; and the half fictitious and contemplative, half visionary and believed images of the presence of death itself, doing its

daily work in the chambers of sickness and sin, and waiting for its hour in the fortalices of strength and the high places of pleasure;—these, partly degrading us by the instinctive and paralysing terror with which they are attended, and partly ennobling us by leading our thoughts to dwell in the eternal world, fill the last and the most important circle in that great kingdom of dark and distorted power, of which we all must be in some sort the subjects until mortality shall be swallowed up of life; until the waters of the last fordless river cease to roll their untransparent volume between us and the light of heaven, and neither death stand between us and our brethren, nor symbols between us and our God.

If, then, ridding ourselves as far as possible of prejudices owing merely to the school-teaching which remains from the system of the Renaissance, we set ourselves to discover in what races the human soul, taken all in all, reached its highest magnificence, we shall find, I believe, two great families of men, one of the East and South, the other of the West and North: the one including the Egyptians, Jews, Arabians, Assyrians, and Persians; the other I know not whence derived, but seeming to flow forth from Scandinavia, and filling the whole of Europe with its Norman and Gothic energy. And in both these families, wherever they are seen in their ut most nobleness, there the grotesque is developed in its utmost energy; and I hardly know whether most to admire the winged bulls of Nineveh, or the winged dragons of Verona.

The charts of the world which have been drawn up by modern science have thrown into a narrow space the expression of a vast amount of knowledge, but I have never yet seen any one pictorial enough to enable the spectator to imagine the kind of contrast in physical character which

exists between northern and southern countries. We know the differences in detail, but we have not that broad glance and grasp which would enable us to feel them in their fulness We know that gentians grow on the Alps, and olives on the Apennines; but we do not enough conceive for ourselves that varigated mosaic of the world's surface which a bird sees in its migration, that difference between the district of the gentian and of the olive which the stork and the swallow see far off, as they lean upon the sirocco wind. Let us, for a moment, try to raise ourselves even above the level of their flight, and imagine the Mediterranean lying beneath us like an irregular lake, and all its ancient promontories sleeping in the sun; here and there an angry spot of thunder, a grey stain of storm, moving upon the burning field; and here and there a fixed wreath of white volcano smoke, surrounded by its circle of ashes; but for the most part a great peacefulness of light, Syria and Greece, Italy and Spain, laid like pieces of golden pavement into the sea-blue, chased, as we stoop near to them, with bossy beaten work of mountain chains, and glowing softly with terraced gardens, and flowers heavy with frankincense, mixed among masses of laurel, and orange, and plumy palm, that abate with their grey-green shadows the burning of the marble rocks, and of the ledges of porphyry sloping under lucent sand. Then let us pass farther towards the north, until we see the orient colors change gradually into a vast belt of rainy green, where the pastures of Switzerland, and poplar valleys of France, and dark forests of the Danube and Carpathians stretch from the mouths of the Loire to those of the Volga, seen through clefts in grey swirls of rain-cloud and flaky veils of the mist of the brooks, spreading low along the pasture lands; and then, farther north still, to see the earth heave into mighty masses of leaden rock and heathy moor, bordering with a broad waste of gloomy purple that belt of field and wood, and

splintering into irregular and grisly islands amidst the northern seas, beaten by storm, and chilled by ice-drift, and tormented by furious pulses of contending tide, until the roots of the last forests fail from among the hill ravines, and the hunger of the north wind bites their peaks into barrenness; and, at last, the wall of ice durable like iron, sets, death-like, its white teeth against us out of the polar twilight. And, having once traversed in thought this gradation of the zoned iris of the earth in all its material vastness, let us go down nearer to it, and watch the parallel change in the belt of animal life: the multitudes of swift and brilliant creatures that glance in the air and sea, or tread the sands of the southern zone; striped zebras and spotted leopards, glistening serpents, and birds arrayed in purple and scarlet. Let us contrast their delicacy and brilliancy of color, and swiftness of motion, with the frost-cramped strength, and shaggy covering, and dusky plumage of the northern tribes; contrast the Arabian horse with the Shetland, the tiger and leopard with the wolf and bear, the antelope with the elk, the bird of paradise with the osprey; and then, submissively acknowledging the great laws by which the earth and all that it bears are ruled throughout their being, let us not condemn, but rejoice in the expression by man of his own rest in the statutes of the land that gave him birth. Let us watch him with reverence as he sets side by side the burning gems, and smooths with soft sculpture the jasper pillars, that are to reflect a ceaseless sunshine, and rise into a cloudless sky; but not with less reverence let us stand by him, when, with rough strength and hurried stroke, he smites an uncouth animation out of the rocks which he has torn from among the moss of the moorland, and heaves into the darkened air the pile of iron buttress and rugged wall, instinct with work of an imagination as wild and wayward as the northern sea; creations of ungainly shape and rigid limb,

but full of wolfish life; fierce as the winds that beat, and changeful as the clouds that shade them.

In one point of view Gothic is not only the best but the only rational architecture, as being that which can fit itself most easily to all services, vulgar or noble. Undefined in its slope of roof, height of shaft, breadth of arch, or disposition of ground plan, it can shrink into a turret, expand into a hall, coil into a staircase, or spring into a spire, with undegraded grace and unexhausted energy; and whenever it finds occasion for change in its form or purpose, it submits to it without the slightest sense of loss either to its unity or majesty,—subtle and flexible like a fiery serpent, but ever attentive to the voice of the charmer. And it is one of the chief virtues of the Gothic builders, that they never suffered ideas of outside symmetries and consistencies to interfere with the real use and value of what they did. If they wanted a window, they opened one; a room, they added one; a buttress, they built one; utterly regardless of any established conventionalities of external appearance, knowing (as indeed it always happened) that such daring interruptions of the formal plan would rather give additional interest to its symmetry than injure it. So that, in the best times of Gothic, a useless window would rather have been opened in an unexpected place for the sake of the surprise, than a useful one forbidden for the sake of symmetry. Every successive architect, employed upon a great work, built the pieces he added in his own way, utterly regardless of the style adopted by his predecessors; and if two towers were raised in nominal correspondence at the sides of a cathedral front, one was nearly sure to be different from the other, and in each the style at the top to be different from the style at the bottom.

The most striking outward feature in all Gothic architecture

is, that it is composed of pointed arches, as in Romanesque that it is in like manner composed of round ; and this distinction would be quite as clear, though the roofs were taken off every cathedral in Europe. And yet, if we examine carefully into the real force and meaning of the term "roof," we shall, perhaps, be able to retain the old popular idea in a definition of Gothic architecture, which shall also express whatever dependence that architecture has upon true forms of roofing.

Roofs are generally divided into two parts ; the roof proper, that is to say, the shell, vault, or ceiling, internally visible; and the roof-mask, which protects this lower roof from the weather. In some buildings these parts are united in one frame-work ; but in most they are more or less independent of each other, and in nearly all Gothic buildings there is a considerable interval between them.

Now it will often happen, that owing to the nature of the apartments required, or the materials at hand, the roof proper may be flat, coved, or domed, in buildings which in their walls employ pointed arches, and are, in the straitest sense of the word, Gothic in all other respects. Yet so far forth as the roofing alone is concerned, they are not Gothic unless the pointed arch be the principal form adopted either in the stone vaulting or the timbers of the roof proper.

I shall say then, in the first place, that "Gothic architecture is that which uses, if possible, the pointed arch in the roof proper." This is the first step in our definition.

Secondly. Although there may be many advisable or necessary forms for the lower roof or ceiling, there is, in cold countries exposed to rain and snow, only one advisable form for the roof-mask, and that is the gable, for this alone will throw off both rain and snow from all parts of its surface as speedily as possible. Snow can lodge on the top of a dome,

not on the ridge of a gable. And thus, as far as roofing is concerned, the gable is a far more essential feature of Northern architecture than the pointed vault, for the one is a thorough necessity, the other often a grateful conventionality; the gable occurs in the timber-roof of every dwelling-house and every cottage, but not the vault; and the gable built on a polygonal or circular plan, is the origin of the turret and spire; and all the so-called aspiration of Gothic architecture is nothing more than its development. So that we must add to our definition another clause, which will be at present by far the most important, and it will stand thus: "Gothic architecture is that which uses the pointed arch for the roof proper, and the gable for the roof-mask."

And here, in passing, let us notice a principle as true in architecture as in morals. It is not the compelled, but the wilful, transgression of law which corrupts the character. Sin is not in the act, but in the choice. It is a law for Gothic architecture, that it shall use the pointed arch for its roof proper; but because, in many cases of domestic building, this becomes impossible for want of room (the whole height of the apartment being required every where), or in various other ways inconvenient, flat ceilings may be used, and yet the Gothic shall not lose its purity. But in the roof-mask there can be no necessity nor reason for a change of form: the gable is the best; and if any other—dome, or bulging crown, or whatsoever else—be employed at all, it must be in pure caprice and wilful transgression of law. And wherever, therefore, this is done, the Gothic has lost its character; it is pure Gothic no more.

I plead for the introduction of the Gothic form into our domestic architecture, not merely because it is lovely, but because it is the only form of faithful, strong, enduring, and

honorable building, in such materials as come daily to our hands. By an increase of scale and costs it is impossible to build, in any style, what will last for ages; but only in the Gothic is it possible to give security and dignity to work wrought with imperfect means and materials. And I trust that there will come a time when the English people may see the folly of building basely and insecurely. It is common with those architects against whose practice my writings have hitherto been directed, to call them merely theoretical and imaginative. I answer, that there is not a single principle asserted either in the "Seven Lamps" or here, but is of the simplest, sternest veracity, and the easiest practicability; that buildings, raised as I would have them, would stand unshaken for a thousand years; and the buildings raised by the architects who oppose them will not stand for one hundred and fifty, they sometimes do not stand for an hour. There is hardly a week passes without some catastrophe brought about by the base principles of modern building: some vaultless floor that drops the staggering crowd through the jagged rents of its rotten timbers; some baseless bridge that is washed away by the first wave of a common flood; some fungous wall of nascent rottenness that a thunder-shower soaks down with its workmen into a heap of slime and death. These we hear of, day by day; yet these indicate but a thousandth part of the evil. The portion of the national income sacrificed in mere bad building, in the perpetual repairs, and swift condemnation and pulling down of ill-built shells of houses, passes all calculation. And the weight of the penalty is not yet felt; it will tell upon our children some fifty years hence, when the cheap work, and contract work, and stucco and plaster work, and bad iron work, and all the other expedients of modern rivalry, vanity, and dishonesty, begin to show themselves for what they are.

## THE RENAISSANCE.

Although Renaissance architecture assumes very different forms among different nations, it may be conveniently referred to three heads:—Early Renaissance, consisting of the first corruptions introduced into the Gothic schools: Central or Roman Renaissance, which is the perfectly formed style; and Grotesque Renaissance, which is the corruption of the Renaissance itself.

Now, in order to do full justice to the adverse cause, we will consider the abstract *nature* of the school with reference only to its best or central examples. The forms of building which must be classed generally under the term *early* Renaissance are, in many cases, only the extravagances and corruptions of the languid Gothic, for whose errors the classical principle is in no wise answerable. It was stated in the "Seven Lamps," that unless luxury had enervated and subtlety falsified the Gothic forms, Roman traditions could not have prevailed against them; and, although these enervated and false conditions are almost instantly colored by the classical influence, it would be utterly unfair to lay to the charge of that influence the first debasement of the earlier schools, which had lost the strength of their system before they could be struck by the plague.

The manner, however, of the debasement of all schools of art, so far as it is natural, is in all ages the same; luxuriance of ornament, refinement of execution, and idle subtleties of fancy, taking the place of true thought and firm handling; and I do not intend to delay the reader long by the Gothic sick-bed, for our task is not so much to watch the wasting of fever in the features of the expiring King, as to trace the character of that Hazael who dipped the cloth in water, and laid it upon his face. Nevertheless, it is necessary to the completeness of our view of the architecture of Venice, as well as to our under

standing of the manner in which the Central Renaissance obtained its universal dominion, that we glance briefly at the principal forms into which Venetian Gothic first declined. They are two in number: one the corruption of the Gothic itself; the other a partial return to Byzantine forms: for the Venetian mind having carried the Gothic to a point at which it was dissatisfied, tried to retrace its steps, fell back first upon Byzantine types, and through them passed to the first Roman. But in thus retracing its steps, it does not recover its own lost energy. It revisits the places through which it had passed in the morning light, but it is now with wearied limbs, and under the gloomy shadow of the evening.

Against this degraded Gothic, then, came up the Renaissance armies; and their first assault was in the requirement of universal perfection. For the first time since the destruction of Rome, the world had seen, in the work of the greatest artists of the fifteenth century,—in the painting of Ghirlandajo, Masaccio, Francia, Perugino, Pinturicchio, and Bellini; in the sculpture of Mino da Fiesole, of Ghiberti, and Verrocchio,—a perfection of execution and fulness of knowledge which cast all previous art into the shade, and which, being in the work of those men united with all that was great in that of former days, did indeed justify the utmost enthusiasm with which their efforts were, or could be, regarded. But when this perfection had once been exhibited in anything, it was required in everything; the world could no longer be satisfied with less exquisite execution, or less disciplined knowledge. The first thing that it demanded in all work was, that it should be done in a consummate and learned way; and men altogether forgot that it was possible to consummate what was contemptible, and to know what was useless. Imperatively requiring dexterity of touch, they gradually forgot to look for tenderness of feeling;

imperatively requiring accuracy of knowledge, they gradually forgot to ask for originality of thought. The thought and the feeling which they despised departed from them, and they were left to felicitate themselves on their small science and their neat fingering. This is the history of the first attack of the Renaissance upon the Gothic schools, and of its rapid results; more fatal and immediate in architecture than in any other art, because there the demand for perfection was less reasonable, and less consistent with the capabilities of the workman; being utterly opposed to that rudeness or savageness on which, as we saw above, the nobility of the elder schools in great part depends. But, inasmuch as the innovations were founded on some of the most beautiful examples of art, and headed by some of the greatest men that the world ever saw, and as the Gothic with which they interfered was corrupt and valueless, the first appearance of the Renaissance feeling had the appearance of a healthy movement. A new energy replaced whatever weariness or dulness had affected the Gothic mind; an exquisite taste and refinement, aided by extended knowledge, furnished the first models of the new school; and over the whole of Italy a style arose, generally known as cinque-cento, which in sculpture and painting, as I just stated, produced the noblest masters whom the world ever saw, headed by Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Leonardo; but which failed in doing the same in architecture, because, as we have seen above, perfection is therein not possible, and failed more totally than it would otherwise have done, because the classical enthusiasm had destroyed the best types of architectural form.

The effect, then, of the sudden enthusiasm for classical literature, which gained strength during every hour of the fifteenth century, was, as far as respected architecture, to do away with the entire system of Gothic science. The pointed

arch, the shadowy vault, the clustered shaft, the heaven-pointing spire, were all swept away; and no structure was any longer permitted but that of the plain cross-beam from pillar to pillar, over the round arch with square or circular shafts, and a low gabled roof and pediment; two elements of noble form, which had fortunately existed in Rome, were, however, for that reason, still permitted; the cupola, and, internally, the waggon vault.

Do not let me be misunderstood when I speak generally of the evil spirit of the Renaissance. The reader may look through all I have written, from first to last, and he will not find one word but the most profound reverence for those mighty men who could wear the Renaissance armor of proof, and yet not feel it encumber their living limbs,—Leonardo and Michael Angelo, Ghirlandajo and Masaccio, Titian and Tintoret. But I speak of the Renaissance as an evil time, because, when it saw those men go burning forth into the battle, it mistook their armor for their strength; and forthwith encumbered with the painful panoply every stripling who ought to have gone forth only with his own choice of three small stones out of the brook.

Over the greater part of the surface of the world, we find that a rock has been providentially distributed, in a manner particularly pointing it out as intended for the service of man. Not altogether a common rock, it is yet rare enough to command a certain degree of interest and attention wherever it is found; but not so rare as to preclude its use for any purpose to which it is fitted. It is exactly of the consistence which is best adapted for sculpture; that is to say, neither hard nor brittle, nor flaky nor splintery, but uniform, and delicately, yet not ignobly soft—exactly soft enough to allow the sculptor to

work it without force, and trace on it the finest lines of finished forms; and yet so hard as never to betray the touch or moulder away beneath the steel; and so admirably crystallized, and of such permanent elements, that no rains dissolve it, no time changes it, no atmosphere decomposes it; once shaped, it is shaped for ever, unless subjected to actual violence or attrition. This rock, then, is prepared by Nature for the sculptor and architect, just as paper is prepared by the manufacturer for the artist, with as great—nay, with greater—care, and more perfect adaptation of the material to the requirements. And of this marble paper, some is white and some colored; but more is colored than white, because the white is evidently meant for sculpture, and the colored for the covering of large surfaces. Now if we would take Nature at her word, and use this precious paper which she has taken so much care to provide for us (it is a long process, the making of that paper; the pulp of it needed the subtlest possible solution, and the pressing of it—for it is all hot pressed—having to be done under the sea, or under something at least as heavy); if, I say, we use it as Nature would have us, consider what advantages would follow.

The colors of marble are mingled for us just as if on a prepared palette. They are of all shades and hues (except bad ones), some being united and even, some broken, mixed, and interrupted, in order to supply, as far as possible, the want of the painter's power of breaking and mingling the color with the brush. But there is more in the colors than this delicacy of adaptation. There is history in them. By the manner in which they are arranged in every piece of marble, they record the means by which that marble has been produced, and the successive changes through which it has passed. And in all their veins and zones, and flame-like stainings, or broken and

disconnected lines, they write various legends, never untrue, of the former political state of the mountain kingdom to which they belonged, of its infirmities and fortitudes, convulsions and consolidations, from the beginning of time.

# Part 4.

# SCULPTURE.

"My friend, all speech and humor is short lived, foolish, untrue. Genuine *work* alone, what thou workest faithfully, that is eternal.

"Take courage, then—raise the arm—strike home and that right lustily—the citadel of Hope must yield to noble desire, thus seconded by noble efforts."

## Part 4.

### SCULPTURE.

Architecture is the work of nations; but we cannot have nations of great sculptors. Every house in every street of every city ought to be good architecture, but we cannot have Flaxman or Thorwaldsen at work upon it, nor if we choose only to devote ourselves to our public buildings, could the mass and majority of them be great, if we required all to be executed by great men; greatness is not to be had in the required quantity. Giotto may design a Campanile, but he cannot carve it, he can only carve one or two of the bas-reliefs at the base of it. And with every increase of your fastidiousness in the execution of your ornament, you diminish the possible number and grandeur of your buildings. Do not think you can educate your workmen, or that the demand for perfection will increase the supply; educated imbecility and finessed foolishness are the worst of all imbecilities and foolishnesses, and there is no free-trade measure which will ever lower the price of brains,—there is no California of common sense.

Suppose one of those old Ninevite or Egyptian builders, with a couple of thousand men—mud-bred, onion-eating creatures, under him, to be set to work, like so many ants, on his temple sculptures. What is he to do with them? He can put them through a granitic exercise of current hand; he can teach them all how to curl hair thoroughly into croche-

cœurs, as you teach a bench of school-boys how to shape pot hooks; he can teach them all how to draw long eyes and straight noses, and how to copy accurately certain well-defined lines. Then he fits his own great designs to their capacities; he takes out of king, or lion, or god, as much as was expressible by croche-cœurs and granitic pothooks; he throws this into noble forms of his own imagining, and having mapped out their lines so that there can be no possibility of error, sets his two thousand men to work upon them, with a will and so many onions a day.

Those times cannot now return. We have, with Christianity, recognised the individual value of every soul; and there is no intelligence so feeble but that its single ray may in some sort contribute to the general light.

It is foolish to carve what is to be seen forty yards off with the delicacy which the eye demands within two yards; not merely because it is lost in the distance, but because it is a great deal worse than lost; the delicate work has actually worse effect in the distance than rough work.

We may be asked, whether in advocating this adaptation to the distance of the eye, I obey my adopted rules of observance of natural law. Are not all natural things, it may be asked, as lovely near as far away? Nay, not so. Look at the clouds, and watch the delicate sculpture of their alabaster sides, and the rounded lustre of their magnificent rolling. They are meant to be beheld far away; they were shaped for their place, high above your head; approach them, and they fuse into vague mists, or whirl away in fierce fragments of thunderous vapor. Look at the crest of the Alp, from the far-away plains over which the light is cast, whence human souls have communion with it by their myriads. The child looks up to it in the dawn, and the husbandman in the burden

and heat of the day, and the old man in the going down of the sun, and it is to them all as the celestial city on the world's horizon; dyed with the depths of heaven, and clothed with the calm of eternity. There was it set, for holy dominion, by Him who marked for the sun his journey, and bade the moon know her going down. It was built for its place in the far-off sky; approach it, and as the sound of the voice of man dies away about its foundations, and the tide of human life, shallowed upon the vast arid shore, is at last met by the Eternal "Here shall thy proud waves be stayed," the glory of its aspect fades into blanched fearfulness; its purple walls are rent into grisly rocks, its silver fretwork saddened into wasting snow; the storm-brands of ages are on its breast, the ashes of its own ruin lie solemnly on its white raiment.

Now it is indeed true that where nature loses one kind of beauty, as you approach it, she substitutes another; this is worthy of her infinite power, and art can sometimes follow her even in doing this. Take a singular and marked instance. When the sun rises behind a ridge of pines, and those pines are seen from a distance of a mile or two; against his light, the whole form of the tree, trunk, branches, and all becomes one frostwork of intensely brilliant silver, which is relieved against the day sky like a burning fringe, for some distance on either side of the sun! Shakspeare and Wordsworth have noticed this. Shakspeare in Richard II.:—

> "But when, from under this terrestrial ball,
> He fires the proud tops of the eastern pines."

And Wordsworth, in one of his minor poems, on leaving Italy:—

> My thoughts become bright, like yon edging of pines;
> On the steep's lofty verge, how it blackened the air.
> But touched from behind by the sun, it now shines
> With threads that seem part of his own silver hair.

Now, suppose one who had never seen pines, were, for the first time in his life, to see them under this strange aspect, and, reasoning as to the means by which such effect could be produced, laboriously to approach the eastern ridge, how would he be amazed to find that the fiery spectres had been produced by trees with swarthy and grey trunks, and dark green leaves! We in our simplicity, if we had been required to produce such an appearance, should have built up trees of chased silver, with trunks of glass, and then been grievously amazed to find that, at two miles off, neither silver nor glass were any more visible; but Nature knew better, and prepared for her fairy work with the strong branches and dark leaves, in her own mysterious way.

Now this is exactly what you have to do with your good ornament. It may be that it is capable of being approached, as well as likely to be seen far away, and then it ought to have microscopic qualities, as the pine leaves have, which will bear approach. But your calculation of its purpose is for a glory to be produced at a *given* distance.

All noble ornament is the expression of man's delight in God's work.

The function of ornament is to make you happy. Now, in what are you *rightly* happy? Not in thinking what you have done yourself; not in your own pride; not in your own birth; not in your own being, or your own will, but in looking at God; watching what He does, what He is; and obeying His law, and yielding yourself to His will.

You are to be made happy by ornaments; therefore they must be the expression of all this.

Then the proper material of ornament will be whatever God has created; and its proper treatment, that which seems in accordance with, or symbolical of, his laws. And, for material, we shall therefore have, first, the abstract lines which are

most frequent in nature; and then, from lower to higher, the whole range of systematized inorganic and organic forms We shall rapidly glance in order at their kinds, and however absurd the elemental division of inorganic matter by the ancients may seem to the modern chemist, it is so grand and simple for arrangement of external appearances, that I shall here follow it; noticing first, after Abstract Lines, the inimitable forms of the four elements, of Earth, Water, Fire, and Air, and then those of animal organisms.

It may be convenient to have the order stated in succession, thus:—

1. Abstract Lines.
2. Forms of Earth (Crystals).
3. Forms of Water (Waves).
4. Forms of Fire (Flames and Rays).
5. Forms of Air (Clouds).
6. Organic Forms. Shells.
7. Fish.
8. Reptiles and Insects.
9. Vegetation. Stems and Trunks.
10. Vegetation. Foliage, Flowers, and Fruit.
11. Birds.
12. Mammalian Animals and Man.

We find, at the close of the sixteenth century, the arts of painting and sculpture wholly devoted to entertain the indolent and satiate the luxurious. To effect these noble ends, they took a thousand different forms; painting, however, of course being the most complying, aiming sometimes at mere amusement by deception in landscapes, or minute imitation of natural objects; sometimes giving more piquant excitement in battle-pieces full of slaughter, or revels deep in drunkenness; sometimes entering upon serious subjects, for the sake of grotesque

fiends and picturesque infernos, or that it might introduce pretty children as cherubs, and handsome women as Magdalenes and Maries of Egypt, or portraits of patrons in the character of the more decorous saints; but more frequently, for direct flatteries of this kind, recurring to Pagan mythology, and painting frail ladies as goddesses or graces, and foolish kings in radiant apotheosis; while, for the earthly delight of the persons whom it honored as divine, it ransacked the records of luscious fable, and brought back, in fullest depth of dye and flame of fancy, the impurest dreams of the un-Christian ages.

Meanwhile, the art of sculpture, less capable of ministering to mere amusement, was more or less reserved for the affectations of taste; and the study of the classical statues introduced various ideas on the subjects of "purity," "chastity," and "dignity," such as it was possible for people to entertain who were themselves impure, luxurious, and ridiculous. It is a matter of extreme difficulty to explain the exact character of this modern sculpturesque ideal; but its relation to the true ideal may be best understood by considering it as in exact parallelism with the relation of the word "taste" to the word "love." Wherever the word "taste" is used with respect to matters of art, it indicates either that the thing spoken of belongs to some inferior class of objects, or that the person speaking has a false conception of its nature. For, consider the exact sense in which a work of art is said to be "in good or bad taste." It does not mean that it is true or false; that it is beautiful or ugly; but that it does or does not comply either with the laws of choice, which are enforced by certain modes of life; or the habits of mind produced by a particular sort of education. It does not mean merely fashionable, that is, complying with a momentary caprice of the upper classes; but it means agreeing with the habitual sense which the most refined education, common to those upper classes at the period

gives to their whole mind. Now, therefore, so far as that education does indeed tend to make the senses delicate, and the perceptions accurate, and thus enables people to be pleased with quiet instead of gaudy color, and with graceful instead of coarse form; and, by long acquaintance with the best things, to discern quickly what is fine from what is common;—so far, acquired taste is an honorable faculty, and it is true praise of anything to say it is "in good taste." But so far as this higher education has a tendency to narrow the sympathies and harden the heart, diminishing the interest of all beautiful things by familiarity, until even what is best can hardly please, and what is brightest hardly entertain;—so far as it fosters pride, and leads men to found the pleasure they take in anything, not on the worthiness of the thing, but on the degree in which it indicates some greatness of their own (as people build marble porticos, and inlay marble floors, not so much because they like the colors of marble, or find it pleasant to the foot, as because such porches and floors are costly, and separated in all human eyes from plain entrances of stone and timber);—so far as it leads people to prefer gracefulness of dress, manner, and aspect, to value of substance and heart, liking a well *said* thing better than a true thing, and a well trained manner better than a sincere one, and a delicately formed face better than a good-natured one, and in all other ways and things setting custom and semblance above everlasting truth;—so far, finally, as it induces a sense of inherent distinction between class and class, and causes everything to be more or less despised which has no social rank, so that the affection, pleasure, or grief of a clown are looked upon as of no interest compared with the affection and grief of a well-bred man;—just so far, in all these several ways, the feeling induced by what is called a "liberal education" is utterly adverse to the understanding of noble art; and the name which is given to the feeling,—Taste, Goût, Gusto,—in

all languages, indicates the baseness of it, for it implies that art gives only a kind of pleasure analogous to that derived from eating by the palate.

Modern education, not in art only, but in all other things referable to the same standard, has invariably given taste in this bad sense; it has given fastidiousness of choice without judgment, superciliousness of manner without dignity, refinement of habit without purity, grace of expression without sincerity, and desire of loveliness without love; and the modern "Ideal" of high art is a curious mingling of the gracefulness and reserve of the drawing-room with a certain measure of classical sensuality. Of this last element, and the singular artifices by which vice succeeds in combining it with what appears to be pure and severe, it would take us long to reason fully; I would rather leave the reader to follow out for himself the consideration of the influence, in this direction, of statues, bronzes, and paintings, as at present employed by the upper circles of London, and (especially) Paris; and this not so much in the works which are really fine, as in the multiplied coarse copies of them; taking the widest range, from Dannaeker's Ariadne down to the amorous shepherd and shepherdess in china on the drawing room time-piece, rigidly questioning in each case, how far the charm of the art does indeed depend on some appeal to the inferior passions. Let it be considered, for instance, exactly how far the value of a picture of a girl's head by Greuze would be lowered in the market, if the dress, which now leaves the bosom bare, were raised to the neck; and how far, in the commonest lithograph of some utterly popular subject,—for instance, the teaching of Uncle Tom by Eva—the sentiment which is supposed to be excited by the exhibition of Christianity in youth is complicated with that which depends upon Eva's having a dainty foot and a well-made satin slipper; and then, having completely deter

mined for himself how far the element exists, consider farther, whether, when art is thus frequent (for frequent he will assuredly find it to be) in its appeal to the lower passions, it is likely to attain the highest order of merit, or be judged by the truest standards of judgment. For, of all the causes which have combined, in modern times, to lower the rank of art, I believe this to be one of the most fatal; while, reciprocally, it may be questioned how far society suffers, in its turn, from the influences possessed over it by the arts it has degraded. It seems to me a subject of the very deepest interest to determine what has been the effect upon the European nations of the great change by which art became again capable of ministering delicately to the lower passions, as it had in the worst days of Rome; how far, indeed, in all ages, the fall of nations may be attributed to art's arriving at this particular stage among them. I do not mean that, in any of its stages, it is incapable of being employed for evil, but that assuredly an Egyptian, Spartan, or Norman was unexposed to the kind of temptation which is continually offered by the delicate painting and sculpture of modern days; and, although the diseased imagination might complete the perfect image of beauty from the colored image on the wall,* or the most revolting thoughts be suggested by the mocking barbarism of the Gothic sculpture, their hard outline and rude execution were free from all the subtle treachery which now fills the flushed canvass and the rounded marble.

I cannot, however, pursue this inquiry here. For our present purpose it is enough to note that the feeling, in itself so debased, branches upwards into that of which, while no one has cause to be ashamed, no one, on the other hand, has cause to be proud, namely, the admiration of physical beauty in the human form, as distinguished from expression of character.

* Ezek. xxiii. 14.

Every one can easily appreciate the merit of regular features and well-formed limbs, but it requires some attention, sympathy, and sense, to detect the charm of passing expression, or life-disciplined character. The beauty of the Apollo Belvidere, or Venus de Medicis, is perfectly palpable to any shallow fine lady or fine gentleman, though they would have perceived none in the face of an old weather-beaten St. Peter, or a grey-haired "Grandmother Lois." The knowledge that long study is necessary to produce these regular types of the human form renders the facile admiration matter of eager self-complacency; the shallow spectator, delighted that he can really, and without hypocrisy, admire what required much thought to produce, supposes himself endowed with the highest critical faculties, and easily lets himself be carried into rhapsodies about the "ideal," which, when all is said, if they be accurately examined, will be found literally to mean nothing more than that the figure has got handsome calves to its legs, and a straight nose.

That they do mean, in reality, nothing more than this may be easily ascertained by watching the taste of the same persons in other things. The fashionable lady who will write five or six pages in her diary respecting the effect upon her mind of such and such an "ideal" in marble, will have her drawing-room table covered with Books of Beauty, in which the engravings represent the human form in every possible aspect of distortion and affectation; and the connoisseur who, in the morning, pretends to the most exquisite taste in the antique, will be seen, in the evening, in his opera-stall, applauding the least graceful gestures of the least modest figurante.

But even this vulgar pursuit of physical beauty (vulgar in the profoundest sense, for there is no vulgarity like the vulgarity of education) would be less contemptible if it really succeeded in its object; but, like all pursuits carried to inordinate length,

it defeats itself. Physical beauty *is* a noble thing when it is seen in perfectness; but the manner in which the moderns pursue their ideal prevents their ever really seeing what they are always seeking; for, requiring that all forms should be regular and faultless, they permit, or even compel, their painters and sculptors to work chiefly by rule, altering their models to fit their preconceived notions of what is right. When such artists look at a face, they do not give it the attention necessary to discern what beauty is already in its peculiar features; but only to see how best it may be altered into something for which they have themselves laid down the laws. Nature never unveils her beauty to such a gaze. She keeps whatever she has done best, close sealed, until it is regarded with reverence. To the painter who honors her, she will open a revelation in the face of a street mendicant; but in the work of the painter who alters her, she will make Portia become ignoble and Perdita graceless.

Nor is the effect less for evil on the mind of the general observer. The lover of ideal beauty, with all his conceptions narrowed by rule, never looks carefully enough upon the features which do not come under his law (or any others), to discern the inner beauty in them. The strange intricacies about the lines of the lips, and marvellous shadows and watchfires of the eye, and wavering traceries of the eyelash, and infinite modulations of the brow, wherein high humanity is embodied, are all invisible to him. He finds himself driven back at last, with all his idealism, to the lionne of the ball-room, whom youth and passion can as easily distinguish as his utmost critical science; whereas, the observer who has accustomed himself to take human faces as God made them, will often find as much beauty on a village green as in the proudest room of state, and as much in the free seats of a church aisle, as in all the sacred paintings of the Vatican or the Pitti.

The difference in the accuracy of the lines of the Torso of the Vatican (the Maestro of M. Angelo) from those in one of M. Angelo's finest works, could perhaps scarcely be appreciated by any eye or feeling undisciplined by the most perfect and practical anatomical knowledge. It rests on points of such traceless and refined delicacy, that though we feel them in the result, we cannot follow them in the details. Yet they are such and so great as to place the Torso alone in art, solitary and supreme; while the finest of M. Angelo's works, considered with respect to truth alone, are said to be only on a level with antiques of the second class, under the Apollo and Venus, that is, two classes or grades below the Torso. But suppose the best sculptor in the world, possessing the most entire appreciation of the excellence of the Torso, were to sit down, pen in hand, to try and tell us wherein the peculiar truth of each line consisted? Could any words that he could use make us feel the hairbreadth of depth and distance on which all depends? or end in anything more than bare assertions of the inferiority of this line to that, which, if we did not perceive for ourselves, no explanation could ever illustrate to us? He might as well endeavor to explain to us by words some taste or other subject of sense, of which we had no experience. And so it is with all truths of the highest order; they are separated from those of average precision by points of extreme delicacy, which none but the cultivated eye can in the least feel, and to express which, all words are absolutely meaningless and useless. So far as the sight and knowledge of the human form, of the purest race, exercised from infancy constantly, but not excessively, in all exercises of dignity, not in twists and straining dexterities, but in natural exercises of running, casting, or riding; practised in endurance, not of extraordinary hardship, for that hardens and degrades the body, but of natural hardship, vicissitudes of

winter and summer, and cold and heat, yet in a climate where none of these are severe; surrounded also by a certain degree of right luxury, so as to soften and refine the forms of strength; so far as the sight of this could render the mental intelligence of what is right in human form so acute as to be able to abstract and combine from the best examples so produced, that which was most perfect in each, so far the Greek conceived and attained the ideal of bodily form.

Form we find abstractedly considered by the sculptor; how far it would be possible to advantage a statue by the addition of color, I venture not to affirm; the question is too extensive to be here discussed. High authorities and ancient practice, are in favor of color; so the sculpture of the middle ages: the two statues of Mino da Fiesole in the church of St^a. Caterina at Pisa have been colored, the irises of the eyes painted dark, and the hair gilded, as also I think the Madonna in St^a. Maria della Spina; the eyes have been painted in the sculptures of Orcagna in Or San Michele, but it looks like a remnant of barbarism, (compare the pulpit of Guida da Como, in the church of San Bartolomeo at Pistoja,) and I have never seen color on any solid forms, that did not, to my mind, neutralize all other power; the porcelains of Luca della Robbia are painful examples, and in lower art, Florentine mosaic in relief; gilding is more admissible, and tells sometimes sweetly upon figures of quaint design, as on the pulpit of St^a. Maria Novella, while it spoils the classical ornaments of the mouldings. But the truest grandeur of sculpture I believe to be in the white form.

It was said by Michael Angelo that "non ha l'ottimo scultore alcun concetto, Ch'un marmo solo in se non circoscriva," a sentence which, though in the immediate sense intended by the writer it may remind us a little of the indignation of Boi-

leau's Pluto, "Il s'ensuit de la que tout ce qui se peut dire de beau, est dans les dictionnaires,—il n'y a que les paroles qui sont transposées," yet is valuable, because it shows us that Michael Angelo held the imagination to be entirely expressible in rock, and therefore altogether independent, in its own nature, of those aids of color and shade by which it is recommended in Tintoret, though the sphere of its operation is of course by these incalculably extended. But the presence of the imagination may be rendered in marble as deep, thrilling, and awful as in painting, so that the sculptor seek for the soul and govern the body thereby.

Of unimaginative work, Bandinelli and Canova supply us with characteristic instances of every kind, the Hercules and Cacus of the former, and its criticism by Cellini, will occur at once to every one; the disgusting statue now placed so as to conceal Giotto's important tempera picture in Santa Croce is a better instance, but a still more important lesson might be received by comparing the inanity of Canova's garland grace, and ball-room sentiment with the intense truth, tenderness, and power of men like Mino da Fiesole, whose chisel leaves many a hard edge, and despises down and dimple, but it seems to cut light and carve breath, the marble burns beneath it, and becomes transparent with very spirit. Yet Mino stopped at the human nature; he saw the soul, but not the ghostly presences about it; it was reserved for Michael Angelo to pierce deeper yet, and to see the indwelling angels. No man's soul is alone: Laocoon or Tobit, the serpent has it by the heart or the angel by the hand, the light or the fear of the spiritual things that move beside it may be seen on the body; and that bodily form with Buonaroti, white, solid, distinct material, though it be, is invariably felt as the instrument or the habitation of some infinite, invisible power. The earth of the Sistine Adam that begins to burn; the woman embodied burst

of adoration from his sleep; the twelve great torrents of the Spirit of God that pause above us there, urned in their vessels of clay; the waiting in the shadow of futurity of those through whom the promise and presence of God went down from the Eve to the Mary, each still and fixed, fixed in his expectation, silent, foreseeing, faithful, seated each on his stony throne, the building stones of the word of God, building on and on, tier by tier, to the Refused one, the head of the corner; not only these, not only the troops of terror torn up from the earth by the four quartered winds of the Judgment, but every fragment and atom of stone though compelled to represent the Sinai under conventional form, in order that the receiving of the tables might be seen at the top of it, yet so soon as it is possible to give more truth, he is ready with it; he takes a grand fold of horizontal cloud straight from the flanks of the Alps, and shows the forests of the mountains through its misty volume, like sea-weed through deep sea. Nevertheless when the realization is impossible, bold symbolism is of the highest value, and in religious art, as we shall presently see, even necessary, as of the rays of light in the Titian woodcut of St. Francis before noticed; and sometimes the attention is directed by some such strange form to the meaning of the image, which may be missed if it remains in its natural purity, (as, I suppose, few in looking at the Cephalus and Procris of Turner, note the sympathy of those faint rays that are just drawing back and dying between the trunks of the far-off forest, with the ebbing life of the nymph; unless, indeed, they happen to recollect the same sympathy marked by Shelley in the Alastor;) but the imagination is not shown in any such modifications; however, in some cases they may be valuable (in the Cephalus they would be utterly destructive), and I note them merely in consequence of their peculiar use in religious art, presently to be examined.

The last mode we have here to note, in which the imagination regardant may be expressed in art is exaggeration, of which, as it is the vice of all bad artists, and may be constantly resorted to without any warrant of imagination, it is necessary to note strictly the admissible limits.

By comparing the disgusting convulsions of the Laocoon, with the Elgin Theseus, we may obtain a general idea of the effect of the influence, as shown by its absence in one, and presence in the other, of two works which, as far as artistical merit is concerned, are in some measure parallel, not that I believe, even in this respect, the Laocoon justifiably comparable with the Theseus. I suppose that no group has exercised so pernicious an influence on art as this, a subject ill chosen, meanly conceived and unnaturally treated, recommended to imitation by subtleties of execution and accumulation of technical knowledge.

I would also have the reader compare with the meagre lines and contemptible tortures of the Laocoon, the awfulness and quietness of M. Angelo's treatment of a subject in most respects similar, (the plague of the Fiery Serpents,) but of which the choice was justified both by the place which the event holds in the typical system he had to arrange, and by the grandeur of the plague itself, in its multitudinous grasp, and its mystical salvation; sources of sublimity entirely wanting to the slaughter of the Dardan priest. It is good to see how his gigantic intellect reaches after repose, and truthfully finds it, in the falling hand of the near figure, and in the deathful decline of that whose hands are held up even in their venomed coldness to the cross; and though irrelevant to our present purpose, it is well also to note how the grandeur of this treatment results, not merely from choice, but from a greater knowledge and more faithful rendering of truth. For whatever knowledge of the human frame there may be in the Laocoon, there is certainly none of

the habits of serpents. The fixing of the snake's head in the side of the principal figure is as false to nature, as it is poor in composition of line. A large serpent never wants to bite, it wants to hold, it seizes therefore always where it can hold best, by the extremities or throat, it seizes once and for ever, and that before it coils, following up the seizure with the twist of its body round the victim, as invisibly swift as the twist of a whip lash round any hard object it may strike, and then it holds fast, never moving the jaws or the body; if its prey has any power of struggling left, it throws round another coil, without quitting the hold with the jaws; if Laocoon had had to do with real serpents, instead of pieces of tape with heads to them, he would have been held still, and not allowed to throw his arms or legs about. It is most instructive to observe the accuracy of Michael Angelo in the rendering of these circumstances; the binding of the arms to the body, and the knotting of the whole mass of agony together, until we hear the crashing of the bones beneath the grisly sliding of the engine folds. Note also the expression in all the figures of another circumstance, the torpor and cold numbness of the limbs induced by the serpent venom, which, though justifiably overlooked by the sculptor of the Laocoon, as well as by Virgil—in consideration of the rapidity of the death by crushing, adds infinitely to the power of the Florentine's conception, and would have been better hinted by Virgil, than that sickening distribution of venom on the garlands. In fact, Virgil has missed both of truth and impressiveness every way—the "morsu depascitur" is unnatural butchery—the "perfusus veneno" gratuitous foulness—the "clamores horrendos," impossible degradation; compare carefully the remarks on this statue in Sir Charles Bell's Essay on Expression, (third edition, p. 192,) where he has most wisely and uncontrovertibly deprived the statue of all claim to expression of energy and fortitude of

mind, and shown its common and coarse intent of mere bodily exertion and agony, while he has confirmed Payne Knight's just condemnation of the passage in Virgil.

If the reader wishes to see the opposite or imaginative view of the subject, let him compare Winkelmann; and Schiller, Letters on Æsthetic Culture.

Whenever, in monumental work, the sculptor reaches a deceptive appearance of life or death, or of concomitant details, he has gone too far. The statue should be felt for such, not look like a dead or sleeping body; it should not convey the impression of a corpse, nor of sick and outwearied flesh, but it should be the marble *image* of death or weariness. So the concomitants should be distinctly marble, severe and monumental in their lines, not shroud, not bedclothes, not actual armor nor brocade, not a real soft pillow, not a downright hard stuffed mattress, but the mere type and suggestion of these: a certain rudeness and incompletion of finish is very noble in all. Not that they are to be unnatural, such lines as are given should be pure and true, and clear of the hardness and mannered rigidity of the strictly Gothic types, but lines so few and grand as to appeal to the imagination only, and always to stop short of realization. There is a monument put up lately by a modern Italian sculptor in one of the side chapels of Santa Croce, the face fine and the execution dexterous. But it looks as if the person had been restless all night, and the artist admitted to a faithful study of the disturbed bedclothes in the morning.

No herculean form is spiritual, for it is degrading the spiritual creature to suppose it operative through impulse of bone and sinew; its power is immaterial and constant, neither dependent on, nor developed by exertion. Generally, it is well to conceal anatomical development as far as may be; even Michael Angelo's anatomy interferes with his divinity; in the

hands of lower men the angel becomes a preparation. How far it is possible to subdue or generalize the naked form I venture not to affirm, but I believe that it is best to conceal it as far as may be, not with draperies light and undulating, that fall in with, and exhibit its principal lines, but with draperies severe and linear, such as were constantly employed before the time of Raffaelle. I recollect no single instance of a naked angel that does not look boylike or childlike, and unspiritualized; even Fra Bartolomeo's might with advantage be spared from the pictures at Lucca, and in the hands of inferior men, the sky is merely encumbered with sprawling infants; those of Domenichino in the Madonna del Rosario, and Martyrdom of St. Agnes, are peculiarly offensive, studies of bare-legged children howling and kicking in volumes of smoke. Confusion seems to exist in the minds of subsequent painters between Angels and Cupids.

The sculptor does not work for the anatomist, but for the common observer of life and nature. Yet the sculptor is not, for this reason, permitted to be wanting either in knowledge or expression of anatomical detail; and the more refined that expression can be rendered, the more perfect is his work. That which, to the anatomist, is the end,—is, to the sculptor, the means. The former desires details, for their own sake; the latter, that by means of them, he may kindle his work with life, and stamp it with beauty.

A colossal statue is necessarily no more an exaggeration of what it represents than a miniature is a diminution; it need not be a representation of a giant, but a representation, on a large scale, of a man; only it is to be observed, that as any plane intersecting the cone of rays between us and the object, must receive an image smaller than the object; a small image is rationally and completely expressive of a larger one; but not a large of a small one. Hence I think that all statues above

the Elgin standard, or that of Michael Angelo's Night and Morning, are, in a measure, taken by the eye for representations of giants.

Michael Angelo was once commanded by Pietro di Medici to mould a statue out of snow, and he obeyed the command. I am glad, and we have all reason to be glad, that such a fancy ever came into the mind of the unworthy prince, and for this cause: that Pietro di Medici then gave, at the period of one great epoch of consummate power in the arts, the perfect, accurate, and intensest possible type of the greatest error which nations and princes can commit, respecting the power of genius entrusted to their guidance. You had there, observe, the strongest genius in the most perfect obedience; capable of iron independence, yet wholly submissive to the patron's will; at once the most highly accomplished and the most original, capable of doing as much as man could do, in any direction that man could ask. And its governor, and guide, and patron sets it to build a statue in snow—to put itself into the service of annihilation—to make a cloud of itself, and pass away from the earth.

Now this, so precisely and completely done by Pietro di Medici, is what we are all doing, exactly in the degree in which we direct the genius under our patronage to work in more or less perishable materials. So far as we induce painters to work in fading colors, or architects to build with imperfect structure, or in any other way consult only immediate ease and cheapness in the production of what we want, to the exclusion of provident thought as to its permanence and serviceableness in after ages; so far we are forcing our Michael Angelos to carve in snow. The first duty of the economist in art is, to see that no intellect shall thus glitter merely in the manner of hoar-frost; but that it shall be well vitrified, like a painted window, and

shall be set so between shafts of stone and bands of iron, that it shall bear the sunshine upon it, and send the sunshine through it from generation to generation.

How are we to get our men of genius: that is to say, by what means may we produce among us, at any given time, the greatest quantity of effective art-intellect? A wide question, you say, involving an account of all the best means of art education. Yes, but I do not mean to go into the consideration of those; I want only to state the few principles which lie at the foundation of the matter. Of these, the first is that you have always to find your artist, not to make him; you can't manufacture him, any more than you can manufacture gold. You can find him, and refine him: you dig him out as he lies nugget-fashion in the mountain-stream; you bring him home; and you make him into current coin, or household plate, but not one grain of him can you originally produce. A certain quantity of art-intellect is born annually in every nation, greater or less according to the nature and cultivation of the nation, or race of men; but a perfectly fixed quantity annually, not increasable by one grain. You may lose it, or you may gather it; you may let it lie loose in the ravine, and buried in the sands, or you may make kings' thrones of it, and overlay temple gates with it, as you choose; but the best you can do with it is always merely sifting, melting, hammering, purifying —never creating. And there is another thing notable about this artistical gold; not only is it limited in quantity, but in use. You need not make thrones or golden gates with it unless you like, but assuredly you can't do anything else with it. You can't make knives of it, nor armour, nor railroads. The gold won't cut you, and it won't carry you; put it to a mechanical use, and you destroy it at once. It is quite true that in the greatest artists, their proper artistical faculty is united with every other; and you may make use of the other faculties, and

let the artistical one lie dormant. For aught I know there may be two or three Leonardo da Vincis employed at this moment in your harbors and railroads: but you are not employing their Leonardesque or golden faculty there, you are only oppressing and destroying it. And the artistical gift in average men is not joined with others; your born painter, if you don't make a painter of him, won't be a first-rate merchant, or lawyer; at all events, whatever he turns out, his own special gift is unemployed by you; and in no wise helps him in that other business. So here you have a certain quantity of a particular sort of intelligence, produced for you annually by providential laws, which you can only make use of by setting it to its own proper work, and which any attempt to use otherwise involves the dead loss of so much human energy.

I believe that much of the best artistical intellect is daily lost in other avocations. Generally, the temper which would make an admirable artist is humble and observant, capable of taking much interest in little things, and of entertaining itself pleasantly in the dullest circumstances. Suppose, added to these characters, a steady conscientiousness which seeks to do its duty wherever it may be placed, and the power, denied to few artistical minds, of ingenious invention in almost any practical department of human skill, and it can hardly be doubted that the very humility and conscientiousness which would have perfected the painter, have in many instances prevented his becoming one; and that in the quiet life of our steady craftsmen—sagacious manufacturers, and uncomplaining clerks—there may frequently be concealed more genius than ever is raised to the direction of our public works, or to be the mark of our public praises.

Ornamentation is the principal part of architecture, considered as a subject of fine art.

Now observe. It will at once follow from this principle, that *a great architect must be a great sculptor or painter.*

This is a universal law. No person who is not a great sculptor or painter *can* be an architect. If he is not a sculptor or painter, he can only be a *builder.*

The three greatest architects hitherto known in the world were Phidias, Giotto, and Michael Angelo; with all of whom, architecture was only their play, sculpture and painting their work. All great works of architecture in existence are either the work of single sculptors or painters, or of societies of sculptors and painters, acting collectively for a series of years. A Gothic cathedral is properly to be defined as a piece of the most magnificent associative sculpture, arranged on the noblest principles of building, for the service and delight of multitudes; and the proper definition of architecture, as distinguished from sculpture, is merely "the art of designing sculpture for a particular place, and placing it there on the best principles of building."

Hence it clearly follows, that in modern days we have no *architects.* The term "architecture" is not so much as understood by us. I am very sorry to be compelled to the discourtesy of stating this fact, but a fact it is, and a fact which it is necessary to state strongly.

# Part 5.

# PAINTING.

Painting, with all its technicalities, difficulties, and particular ends, is nothing but a noble and expressive language, invaluable as the vehicle of thought, but by itself nothing.

# Part 5.

## PAINTING.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF "GREATNESS OF STYLE" IN PAINTING

I. Choice of Noble Subject.—Greatness of style consists then: first, in the habitual choice of subjects of thought which involve wide interests and profound passions, as opposed to those which involve narrow interests and slight passions. The style is greater or less in exact proportion to the nobleness of the interests and passions involved in the subject. The habitual choice of sacred subjects, such as the Nativity, Transfiguration, Crucifixion (if the choice be sincere), implies that the painter has a natural disposition to dwell on the highest thoughts of which humanity is capable; it constitutes him so far forth a painter of the highest order, as, for instance, Leonardo, in his painting of the Last Supper: he who delights in representing the acts or meditations of great men, as, for instance, Raphael painting the School of Athens, is, so far forth, a painter of the second order: he who represents the passions and events of ordinary life, of the third. And in this ordinary life, he who represents deep thoughts and sorrows, as, for instance, Hunt, in his Claudio and Isabella, and such other works, is of the highest rank in his sphere; and he who represents the slight malignities and passions of the drawing-room, as, for instance, Leslie, of the second rank: he who represents the sports of boys or simplicities of clowns, as Webster or Teniers, of the third rank; and he who represents

brutalities and vices (for delight in them, and not for rebuke of them), of no rank at all, or rather of a negative rank, holding a certain order in the abyss.

The reader will, I hope, understand how much importance is to be attached to the sentence in the first parenthesis, "if the choice be sincere;" for choice of subject is, of course, only available as a criterion of the rank of the painter, when it is made from the heart. Indeed, in the lower orders of painting, the choice is always made from such heart as the painter has; for his selection of the brawls of peasants or sports of children can, of course, proceed only from the fact that he has more sympathy with such brawls or pastimes than with nobler subjects. But the choice of the higher kind of subjects is often insincere; and may, therefore, afford no real criterion of the painter's rank.

It must be remembered, that in nearly all the great periods of art the choice of subject has not been left to the painter. His employer,—abbot, baron, or monarch,—determined for him whether he should earn his bread by making cloisters bright with choirs of saints, painting coats of arms on leaves of romances, or decorating presence-chambers with complimentary mythology; and his own personal feelings are ascertainable only by watching, in the themes assigned to him, what are the points in which he seems to take most pleasure.

II. Love of Beauty.—The second characteristic of the great school of art is, that it introduces in the conception of its subject as much beauty as is possible, consistently with truth.*

* As here, for the first time, I am obliged to use the terms Truth and Beauty in a kind of opposition, I must therefore stop for a moment to state clearly the relation of these two qualities of art; and to protest against the vulgar and foolish habit of confusing truth and beauty with each other. People with shallow powers of thought, desiring to flatter them-

For instance, in any subject consisting of a number of figures, it will make as many of those figures beautiful as the

selves with the sensation of having attained profundity, are continually doing the most serious mischief by introducing confusion into plain matters, and then valuing themselves on being confounded. Nothing is more common than to hear people who desire to be thought philosophical, declare that "beauty is truth," and "truth is beauty." I would most earnestly beg every sensible person who hears such an assertion made, to nip the germinating philosopher in his ambiguous bud; and beg him, if he really believes his own assertion, never thenceforward to use two words for the same thing. The fact is, truth and beauty are entirely distinct, though often related things. One is a property of statements, the other of objects. The statement that "two and two make four" is true, but it is neither beautiful nor ugly, for it is invisible; a rose is lovely, but it is neither true nor false, for it is silent. That which shows nothing cannot be fair, and that which asserts nothing cannot be false. Even the ordinary use of the words false and true as applied to artificial and real things, is inaccurate. An artificial rose is not a "false" rose, it is not a rose at all. The falseness is in the person who states, or induces the belief, that it *is* a rose.

Now, therefore, in things concerning art, the words true and false are only to be rightly used, while the picture is considered as a statement of facts. The painter asserts that this which he has painted is the form of a dog, a man, or a tree. If it be *not* the form of a dog, a man, or a tree, the painter's statement is false; and therefore we justly speak of a false line, or false color; not that any line or color can in themselves be false, but they become so when they convey a statement that they resemble something which they do *not* resemble. But the beauty of the lines or colors is wholly independent of any such statement. They may be beautiful lines, though quite inaccurate, and ugly lines though quite faithful. A picture may be frightfully ugly, which represents with fidelity some base circumstance of daily life; and a painted window may be exquisitely beautiful, which represents men with eagles' faces, and dogs with blue heads and crimson tails (though by the way, this is not in the strict sense *false* art, as we shall see hereafter, inasmuch as it means no assertion that men ever *had* eagles' faces). If this were not so, it would be impossible to sacrifice truth to beauty; for to attain the one would always be to attain the other. But, unfortunately, this sacrifice is exceedingly possible, and it is chiefly this which

faithful representation of humanity will admit. It will not deny the facts of ugliness or decrepitude, or relative inferiority and superiority of feature as necessarily manifested in a crowd, but it will, so far as it is in its power, seek for and dwell upon the fairest forms, and in all things insist on the beauty that is in them, not on the ugliness. In this respect, schools of art become higher in exact proportion to the degree in which they apprehend and love the beautiful. Thus, Angelico, intensely loving all spiritual beauty, will be of the highest rank; and Paul Veronese and Correggio, intensely loving physical and corporeal beauty, of the second rank; and Albert Durer, Rubens, and in general the Northern artists apparently insensible to beauty, and caring only for truth, whether shapely or not, of the third rank; and Teniers and Salvator, Caravaggio, and other such worshippers of the depraved, of no rank, or, as we said before, of a certain order in the abyss.

The corruption of the schools of high art, so far as this particular quality is concerned, consists in the sacrifice of truth to beauty. Great art dwells on all that is beautiful; but false art omits or changes all that is ugly. Great art accepts Nature as she is, but directs the eyes and thoughts to what is most perfect in her; false art saves itself the trouble of direction by removing or altering whatever it thinks objectionable. The evil results of which proceeding are twofold.

First. That beauty deprived of its proper foils and adjuncts

characterises the false schools of high art, so far as high art consists in the pursuit of beauty. For although truth and beauty are independent of each other, it does not follow that we are at liberty to pursue whichever we please. They are indeed separable, but it is wrong to separate them; they are to be sought together in the order of their worthiness; that is to say, truth first, and beauty afterwards. High art differs from low art in possessing an excess of beauty in addition to its truth, not in possessing an excess of beauty incon sistent with truth.

ceases to be enjoyed as beauty, just as light deprived of all shadow ceases to be enjoyed as light. A white canvass cannot produce an effect of sunshine; the painter must darken it in some places before he can make it look luminous in others; nor can an uninterrupted succession of beauty produce the true effect of beauty; it must be foiled by inferiority before its own power can be developed. Nature has for the most part mingled her inferior and nobler elements as she mingles sunshine with shade, giving due use and influence to both, and the painter who chooses to remove the shadow, perishes in the burning desert he has created. The truly high and beautiful art of Angelico is continually refreshed and strengthened by his frank portraiture of the most ordinary features of his brother monks, and of the recorded peculiarities of ungainly sanctity; but the modern German and Raphaelesque schools lose all honor and nobleness in barber-like admiration of handsome faces, and have, in fact, no real faith except in straight noses and curled hair. Paul Veronese opposes the dwarf to the soldier, and the negress to the queen; Shakspere places Caliban beside Miranda, and Autolycus beside Perdita; but the vulgar idealist withdraws his beauty to the safety of the saloon, and his innocence to the seclusion of the cloister; he pretends that he does this in delicacy of choice and purity of sentiment, while in truth he has neither courage to front the monster, nor wit enough to furnish the knave.

It is only by the habit of representing faithfully all things, that we can truly learn what is beautiful and what is not. The ugliest objects contain some element of beauty; and in all, it is an element peculiar to themselves, which cannot be separated from their ugliness, but must either be enjoyed together with it, or not at all. The more a painter accepts nature as he finds it, the more unexpected beauty he discovers in what he at first despised; but once let him arrogate the

right of rejection, and he will gradually contract his circle of enjoyment, until what he supposed to be nobleness of selection ends in narrowness of perception. Dwelling perpetually upon one class of ideas, his art becomes at once monstrous and morbid; until at last he cannot faithfully represent even what he chooses to retain; his discrimination contracts into darkness, and his fastidiousness fades into fatuity.

High art, therefore, consists neither in altering, nor in improving nature; but in seeking throughout nature for "whatsoever things are lovely, and whatsoever things are pure;" in loving these, in displaying to the utmost of the painter's power such loveliness as is in them, and directing the thoughts of others to them by winning art, or gentle emphasis. Of the degree in which this can be done, and in which it may be permitted to gather together, without falsifying, the finest forms or thoughts, so as to create a sort of perfect vision, we shall have to speak hereafter: at present, it is enough to remember that art (*cæteris paribus*) is great in exact proportion to the love of beauty shown by the painter, provided that love of beauty forfeit no atom of truth

III. Sincerity.—The next* characteristic of great art is that it includes the largest possible quantity of Truth in the most perfect possible harmony. If it were possible for art to give all the truths of nature, it ought to do it. But this is not possible. Choice must always be made of some facts which *can* be represented, from among others which must be passed by in silence, or even, in some respects, misrepresented. The inferior artist chooses unimportant and scattered truths; the great artist chooses the most necessary first, and afterwards the most consistent with these, so as to obtain the greatest possible and most harmonious *sum*. For instance, Rembrandt

* I name them in order of *increasing* not decreasing importance.

always chooses to represent the exact force with which the light on the most illumined part of an object is opposed to its obscurer portions. In order to obtain this, in most cases, not very important truth, he sacrifices the light and color of five-sixths of his picture; and the expression of every character of objects which depends on tenderness of shape or tint. But he obtains his single truth, and what picturesque and forcible expression is dependent upon it, with magnificent skill and subtlety. Veronese, on the contrary, chooses to represent the great relations of visible things to each other, to the heaven above, and to the earth beneath them. He holds it more important to show how a figure stands relieved from delicate air, or marble wall; how as a red, or purple, or white figure, it separates itself, in clear discernibility, from things not red, nor purple, nor white; how infinite daylight shines round it; how innumerable veils of faint shadow invest it; how its blackness and darkness are, in the excess of their nature, just as limited and local as its intensity of light: all this, I say, he feels to be more important than showing merely the exact *measure* of the spark of sunshine that gleams on a dagger-hilt.

As its greatness depends on the sum of truth, and this sum of truth can always be increased by delicacy of handling, it follows that all great art must have this delicacy to the utmost possible degree. This rule is infallible and inflexible. All coarse work is the sign of low art. Only, it is to be remembered, that coarseness must be estimated by the distance from the eye; it being necessary to consult this distance, when great, by laying on touches which appear coarse when seen near; but which, so far from being coarse, are, in reality, more delicate in a master's work than the finest close handling, for they involve a calculation of result, and are laid on with a subtlety of sense precisely correspondent to that with which a

good archer draws his bow; the spectator seeing in the action nothing but the strain of the strong arm, while there is, in reality, in the finger and eye, an ineffably delicate estimate of distance, and touch on the arrow plume. And, indeed, this delicacy is generally quite perceptible to those who know what the truth is, for strokes by Tintoret or Paul Veronese, which were done in an instant, and look to an ignorant spectator merely like a violent dash of loaded color (and are, as such, imitated by blundering artists), are, in fact, modulated by the brush and finger to that degree of delicacy that no single grain of the color could be taken from the touch without injury; and little golden particles of it, not the size of a gnat's head, have important share and function in the balances of light in a picture perhaps fifty feet long. Nearly *every* other rule applicable to art has some exception but this. This has absolutely none. All great art is delicate art, and all coarse art is bad art. Nay, even to a certain extent, all *bold* art is bad art; for boldness is not the proper word to apply to the courage and swiftness of a great master, based on knowledge, and coupled with fear and love. There is as much difference between the boldness of the true and the false masters, as there is between the courage of a pure woman and the shamelessness of a lost one.

IV. Invention.—The last characteristic of great art is that it must be inventive, that is, be produced by the imagination. In this respect it must precisely fulfil the definition already given of poetry; and not only present grounds for noble emotion, but furnish these grounds by *imaginative power*. Hence there is at once a great bar fixed between the two schools of Lower and Higher Art. The lower merely copies what is set before it, whether in portrait, landscape, or still-life; the higher either entirely imagines its subject, or arranges the materials presented to it, so as to manifest the imaginative

power in all the three phases which have been already explained in the second volume.

And this was the truth which was confusedly present in Reynolds's mind when he spoke, as above quoted, of the difference between Historical and Poetical Painting. *Every relation of the plain facts which the painter saw* is proper *historical* painting.* If those facts are unimportant (as that he saw a gambler quarrel with another gambler, or a sot enjoying himself with another sot), then the history is trivial; if the facts are important (as that he saw such and such a great man look thus, or act thus, at such a time), then the history is noble: in each case perfect truth of narrative being supposed, otherwise the whole thing is worthless, being neither history nor poetry, but plain falsehood. And farther, as greater or less elegance and precision are manifested in the relation or painting of the incidents, the merit of the work varies; so that, what with difference of subject, and what with difference of treatment, historical painting falls or rises in changeful eminence, from Dutch trivialities to a Velasquez portrait, just as historical talking or writing varies in eminence, from an old woman's story-telling up to Herodotus. Besides which, certain operations of the imagination come into play inevitably, here and there, so as to touch the history with some light of poetry, that is, with some light shot forth of the narrator's mind, or brought out by the way he has put the accidents together; and wherever the imagination has thus had anything to do with the matter at all (and it must be somewhat cold work where it has not), then, the confines of the lower and higher schools touching each other, the work is colored by both; but there is no reason why, therefore, we should in the least confuse the historical and poetical characters, any

* Compare my Edinburgh Lectures, lecture iv. p. 218, et seq. (2d edition).

more than that we should confuse blue with crimson, because they may overlap each other, and produce purple.

Now, historical or simply narrative art is very precious in its proper place and way, but it is never *great* art until the poetical or imaginative power touches it; and in proportion to the stronger manifestation of this power, it becomes greater and greater, while the highest art is purely imaginative, all its materials being wrought into their form by invention; and it differs, therefore, from the simple historical painting, exactly as Wordsworth's stanza, above quoted, differs from Saussure's plain narrative of the parallel fact; and the imaginative painter differs from the historical painter in the manner that Wordsworth differs from Saussure.

Farther, imaginative art always *includes* historical art; so that, strictly speaking, according to the analogy above used, we meet with the pure blue, and with the crimson ruling the blue and changing it into kingly purple, but not with the pure crimson: for all imagination must deal with the knowledge it has before accumulated; it never produces anything but by combination or contemplation. Creation, in the full sense, is impossible to it. And the mode in which the historical faculties are included by it is often quite simple, and easily seen. Thus, in Hunt's great poetical picture of the Light of the World, the whole thought and arrangement of the picture being imaginative, the several details of it are wrought out with simple portraiture; the ivy, the jewels, the creeping plants, and the moonlight being calmly studied or remembered from the things themselves. But of all these special ways in which the invention works with plain facts, we shall have to treat farther afterwards.

And now, finally, since this poetical power includes the historical, if we glance back to the other qualities required in great art, and put all together, we find that the sum of them

is simply the sum of all the powers of man. For as (1) the choice of the high subject involves all conditions of right moral choice, and as (2) the love of beauty involves all conditions of right admiration, and as (3) the grasp of truth involves all strength of sense, evenness of judgment, and honesty of purpose, and as (4) the poetical power involves all swiftness of invention, and accuracy of historical memory, the sum of all these powers is the sum of the human soul. Hence we see why the word "Great" is used of this art. It is literally great. It compasses and calls forth the entire human spirit, whereas any other kind of art, being more or less small or narrow, compasses and calls forth only *part* of the human spirit. Hence the idea of its magnitude is a literal and just one, the art being simply less or greater in proportion to the number of faculties it exercises and addresses.* And this is the ultimate meaning of the definition I gave of it long ago, as containing the "greatest number of the greatest ideas."

Such, then, being the characters required in order to constitute high art, if the reader will think over them a little, and over the various ways in which they may be falsely assumed, he will easily perceive how spacious and dangerous a field of discussion they open to the ambitious critic, and of error to the ambitious artist; he will see how difficult it must be, either to distinguish what is truly great art from the mockeries of it, or to rank the real artists in anything like a progressive system of greater and less. For it will have been observed that the various qualities which form greatness are partly inconsistent with each other (as some virtues are, docility and firmness for instance), and partly independent of each other; and the fact is, that artists differ not more by mere capacity, than by the component *elements* of their capacity, each possessing in very different proportions the several

* Compare Stones of Venice, vol. iii. chap. iv. § 7, and § 21.

attributes of greatness; so that, classed by one kind of merit, as, for instance, purity of expression, Angelico will stand highest; classed by another, sincerity of manner, Veronese will stand highest; classed by another, love of beauty, Leonardo will stand highest; and so on; hence arise continual disputes and misunderstandings among those who think that high art must always be one and the same, and that great artists ought to unite all great attributes in an equal degree.

In one of the exquisitely finished tales of Marmontel, a company of critics are received at dinner by the hero of the story, an old gentleman, somewhat vain of his *acquired* taste, and his niece, by whose incorrigible *natural* taste, he is seriously disturbed and tormented. During the entertainment, "On parcourut tous les genres de littérature, et pour donner plus d'essor à l'érudition et à la critique, on mit sur le tapis cette question toute neuve, sçavoir, lequel méritoit le préférence de Corneille ou de Racine. L'on disoit même là-dessus les plus belles choses du monde, lorsque la petite nièce, qui n'avoit pas dit un mot, s'avisa de demander naïvement lequel des deux fruits, de l'orange ou de la pêche, avoit le goût les plus exquis et méritoit le plus d'éloges. Son oncle rougit de sa simplicité, et les convives baissèrent tous les yeux sans daigner répondre à cette bêtise. Ma nièce, dit Fintac, à votre âge, il faut sçavoir écouter, et se taire."

I cannot close this chapter with shorter or better advice to the reader, than merely, whenever he hears discussions about the relative merits of great masters, to remember the young lady's question. It is, indeed, true that there *is* a relative merit, that a peach is nobler than a hawthorn berry, and still more a hawthorn berry than a bead of the nightshade; but in each rank of fruits, as in each rank of masters, one is endowed with one virtue, and another with another; their glory is their dissimilarity, and they who propose to themselves in the train

ing of an artist that he should unite the coloring of Tintoret, the finish of Albert Durer, and the tenderness of Correggio, are no wiser than a horticulturist would be, who made it the object of his labor to produce a fruit which should unite in itself the lusciousness of the grape, the crispness of the nut, and the fragrance of the pine.

And from these considerations one most important practical corollary is to be deduced, with the good help of Mademoiselle Agathe's simile, namely, that the greatness or smallness of a man is, in the most conclusive sense, determined for him at his birth, as strictly as it is determined for a fruit whether it is to be a currant or an apricot. Education, favorable circumstances, resolution, and industry can do much; in a certain sense they do *everything;* that is to say, they determine whether the poor apricot shall fall in the form of a green bead, blighted by an east wind, shall be trodden under foot, or whether it shall expand into tender pride, and sweet brightness of golden velvet. But apricot out of currant,—great man out of small,—did never yet art or effort make; and, in a general way, men have their excellence nearly fixed for them when they are born; a little cramped and frost-bitten on one side, a little sun-burnt and fortune-spotted on the other, they reach, between good and evil chances, such size and taste as generally belong to the men of their calibre, and the small in their serviceable bunches, the great in their golden isolation, have, these no cause for regret, nor those for disdain.

Therefore it is, that every system of teaching is false which holds forth "great art" as in any wise to be taught to students, or even to be aimed at by them. Great art is precisely that which never was, nor will be taught, it is pre-eminently and finally the expression of the spirits of great men; so that the only wholesome teaching is that which simply endeavors to fix those characters of nobleness in the pupil's mind of which

it seems easily susceptible; and without holding out to him, as a possible or even probable result, that he should ever paint like Titian, or carve like Michael Angelo, enforces upon him the manifest possibility, and assured duty, of endeavoring to draw in a manner at least honest and intelligible; and cultivates in him those general charities of heart, sincerities of thought, and graces of habit which are likely to lead him, throughout life, to prefer openness to affectation, realities to shadows, and beauty to corruption.

### THE FALSE IDEAL.

The pursuit, by the imagination, of beautiful and strange thoughts or subjects, to the exclusion of painful or common ones, is called among us, in these modern days, the pursuit of "*the ideal*;" nor does any subject deserve more attentive examination than the manner in which this pursuit is entered upon by the modern mind. The reader must pardon me for making in the outset one or two statements which may appear to him somewhat wide of the matter, but which, (if he admits their truth,) he will, I think, presently perceive to reach to the root of it. Namely,

That men's proper business in this world falls mainly into three divisions:

First, to know themselves, and the existing state of the things they have to do with.

Secondly, to be happy in themselves, and in the existing state of things.

Thirdly, to mend themselves, and the existing state of things, as far as either are marred or mendable.

These, I say, are the three plain divisions of proper human business on this earth. For these three, the following are usually substituted and adopted by human creatures:

First, to be totally ignorant of themselves, and the existing state of things.

Secondly, to be miserable in themselves, and in the existing state of things.

Thirdly, to let themselves, and the existing state of things, alone (at least in the way of correction).

The dispositions which induce us to manage, thus wisely, the affairs of this life seem to be:

First, a fear of disagreeable facts, and conscious shrinking from clearness of light, which keep us from examining ourselves, and increase gradually into a species of instinctive terror at all truth, and love of glosses, veils, and decorative lies of every sort.

Secondly, a general readiness to take delight in anything past, future, far off, or somewhere else, rather than in things now, near, and here; leading us gradually to place our pleasure principally in the exercise of the imagination, and to build all our satisfaction on things as they are *not*. Which power being one not accorded to the lower animals, and having indeed, when disciplined, a very noble use, we pride ourselves upon it, whether disciplined or not, and pass our lives complacently, in substantial discontent, and visionary satisfaction.

Now *nearly* all artistical and poetical seeking after the ideal is only one branch of this base habit—the abuse of the imagination, in allowing it to find its whole delight in the impossible and untrue; while the faithful pursuit of the ideal is an honest use of the imagination, giving full power and presence to the possible and true.

It is the difference between these two uses of it which we have to examine.

And, first, consider what are the legitimate uses of the imagination, that is to say, of the power of perceiving, or conceiving with the mind, things which cannot be perceived by the senses.

Its first and noblest use is, to enable us to bring sensibly to our sight the things which are recorded as belonging to our future state, or as invisibly surrounding us in this. It is given us, that we may imagine the cloud of witnesses in heaven and earth, and see, as if they were now present, the souls of the righteous waiting for us; that we may conceive the great army of the inhabitants of heaven, and discover among them those whom we most desire to be with for ever; that we may be able to vision forth the ministry of angels beside us, and see the chariots of fire on the mountains that gird us round; but above all, to call up the scenes and facts in which we are commanded to believe, and be present, as if in the body, at every recorded event of the history of the Redeemer. Its second and ordinary use is to empower us to traverse the scenes of all other history, and force the facts to become again visible, so as to make upon us the same impression which they would have made if we had witnessed them; and in the minor necessities of life, to enable us, out of any present good, to gather the utmost measure of enjoyment by investing it with happy associations, and, in any present evil, to lighten it, by summoning back the images of other hours; and, also, to give to all mental truths some visible type in allegory, simile, or personification, which shall more deeply enforce them; and, finally, when the mind is utterly outwearied, to refresh it with such innocent play as shall be most in harmony with the suggestive voices of natural things, permitting it to possess living companionship instead of silent beauty, and create for itself fairies in the grass and naiads in the wave.

These being the uses of imagination, its abuses are either in creating, for mere pleasure, false images, where it is its *duty* to create true ones; or in turning what was intended for the mere refreshment of the heart into its daily food, and

changing the innocent pastimes of an hour into the guilty occupation of a life.

It became necessary, to the full display of all the power of the artist, that the subject should in many respects be more faithfully imagined that it had been hitherto. "Keeping," "Expression," "Historical Unity," and such other requirements, were enforced on the painter, in the same tone, and with the same purpose, as the purity of his oil and the accuracy of his perspective. He was told that the figure of Christ should be "dignified," those of the Apostles "expressive," that of the Virgin "modest," and those of children "innocent." All this was perfectly true; and in obedience to such directions, the painter proceeded to manufacture certain arrangements of apostolic sublimity, virginal mildness, and infantine innocence, which, being free from the quaint imperfection and contradictoriness of the early art, were looked upon by the European public as true things, and trustworthy representations of the events of religious history. The pictures of Francia and Bellini had been received as pleasant visions. But the cartoons of Raphael were received as representations of historical fact.

Now, neither they, nor any other work of the period, were representations either of historical or possible fact. They were, in the strictest sense of the word, "compositions"—cold arrangements of propriety and agreeableness, according to academical formulas; the painter never in any case making the slightest effort to conceive the thing as it must have happened, but only to gather together graceful lines and beautiful faces, in such compliance with commonplace ideas of the subject as might obtain for the whole an "epic unity," or some such other form of scholastic perfectness.

Take a very important instance.

I suppose there is no event in the whole life of Christ to which, in hours of doubt or fear, men turn with more anxious thirst to know the close facts of it, or with more earnest and passionate dwelling upon every syllable of its recorded narrative, than Christ's showing Himself to his disciples at the lake of Galilee. There is something preeminently open, natural, full fronting our disbelief in this manifestation. The others, recorded after the resurrection, were sudden, phantom-like, occurring to men in profound sorrow and wearied agitation of heart; not, it might seem, safe judges of what they saw. But the agitation was now over. They had gone back to their daily work, thinking still their business lay net-wards, unmeshed from the literal rope and drag. "Simon Peter saith unto them, 'I go a fishing.' They say unto him, 'We also go with thee.'" True words enough, and having far echo beyond those Galilean hills. That night they caught nothing; but when the morning came, in the clear light of it, behold a figure stood on the shore. They were not thinking of anything but their fruitless hauls. They had no guess who it was. It asked them simply if they had caught anything. They said no. And it tells them to cast yet again. And John shades his eyes from the morning sun with his hand, to look who it is; and though the glinting of the sea, too, dazzles him, he makes out who it is, at last; and poor Simon, not to be outrun this time, tightens his fisher's coat about him, and dashes in, over the nets. One would have liked to see him swim those hundred yards, and stagger to his knees on the beach.

Well, the others get to the beach, too, in time, in such slow way as men in general do get, in this world, to its true shore, much impeded by that wonderful "dragging the net with fishes;" but they get there—seven of them in all;—first the Denier, and then the slowest believer, and then the quickest

believer, and then the two throne-seekers, and two more, we know not who.

They sit down on the shore face to face with Him, and eat their broiled fish as He bids. And then, to Peter, all dripping still, shivering, and amazed, staring at Christ in the sun on the other side of the coal fire,—thinking a little, perhaps, of what happened by another coal fire, when it was colder, and having had no word once changed with him by his Master since that look of His,—to him, so amazed, comes the question, "Simon, lovest thou me?" Try to feel that a little, and think of it till it is true to you; and then, take up that infinite monstrosity and hypocrisy—Raphael's cartoon of the Charge to Peter. Note, first, the bold fallacy—the putting *all* the Apostles there, a mere lie to serve the Papal heresy of the Petric supremacy, by putting them all in the background while Peter receives the charge, and making them all witnesses to it. Note the handsomely curled hair and neatly tied sandals of the men who had been out all night in the sea-mists and on the slimy decks. Note their convenient dresses for going a-fishing, with trains that lie a yard along the ground, and goodly fringes,—all made to match, an apostolic fishing costume.* Note how Peter especially (whose chief glory was in his wet coat *girt* about him and naked limbs) is enveloped in folds and fringes, so as to kneel and hold his keys with grace. No fire of coals at all, nor lonely mountain shore, but a pleasant Italian landscape, full of villas and churches, and a flock of sheep to be pointed at; and the whole group of Apostles, not round Christ, as they would have been naturally, but straggling away in a line, that they may all be shown.

The simple truth is, that the moment we look at the picture

* I suppose Raphael intended a reference to Numbers xv. 38.; but if he did, the *blue* riband, or "vitta," as it is in the Vulgate, should have been on the borders too.

we feel our belief of the whole thing taken away. There is, visibly, no possibility of that group ever having existed, in any place, or on any occasion. It is all a mere mythic absurdity, and faded concoction of fringes, muscular arms, and curly heads of Greek philosophers.

Now, the evil consequences of the acceptance of this kind of religious idealism for true, were instant and manifold. So far as it was received and trusted in by thoughtful persons, it only served to chill all the conceptions of sacred history which they might otherwise have obtained. Whatever they could have fancied for themselves about the wild, strange, infinitely stern, infinitely tender, infinitely varied veracities of the life of Christ, was blotted out by the vapid fineries of Raphael; the rough Galilean pilot, the orderly custom receiver, and all the questioning wonder and fire of uneducated apostleship, were obscured under an antique masque of philosophical faces and long robes. The feeble, subtle, suffering, ceaseless energy and humiliation of St. Paul were confused with an idea of a meditative Hercules leaning on a sweeping sword;* and the mighty presences of Moses and Elias were softened by introductions of delicate grace adopted from dancing nymphs and rising Auroras.†

Now, no vigorously minded religious person could possibly receive pleasure or help from such art as this; and the neces-

* In the St. Cecilia of Bologna.

† In the Transfiguration. Do but try to believe that Moses and Elias are really there talking with Christ. Moses in the loveliest heart and midst of the land which once it had been denied him to behold,—Elijah treading the earth again, from which he had been swept to heaven in fire; both now with a mightier message than ever they had given in life,—mightier, in closing their own mission,—mightier, in speaking to Christ "of His decease, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." They, men of like passions once with us, appointed to speak to the Redeemer of His death.

And, then, look at Raphael's kicking gracefulnesses.

sary result was the instant rejection of it by the healthy religion of the world. Raphael ministered, with applause, to the impious luxury of the Vatican, but was trampled under foot at once by every believing and advancing Christian of his own and subsequent times; and thenceforward pure Christianity and "high art" took separate roads, and fared on, as best they might, independently of each other.

But although Calvin, and Knox, and Luther, and their flocks, with all the hardest-headed and truest-hearted faithful left in Christendom, thus spurned away the spurious art, and all art with it (not without harm to themselves, such as a man must needs sustain in cutting off a decayed limb*), certain conditions of weaker Christianity suffered the false system to retain influence over them; and to this day, the clear and tasteless poison of the art of Raphael infects with sleep of infidelity the hearts of millions of Christians. It is the first cause of all that preeminent *dulness* which characterizes what Protestants call sacred art; a dulness, not merely baneful in making religion distasteful to the young, but in sickening, as we have seen, all vital belief of religion in the old. A dim sense of impossibility attaches itself always to the graceful emptiness of the representation; we feel instinctively that the painted Christ and painted apostle are not beings that ever did or could exist; and this fatal sense of fair fabulousness, and well-composed impossibility, steals gradually from the picture into the history, until we find ourselves reading St. Mark or St. Luke with the same admiring, but uninterested, incredulity, with which we contemplate Raphael.

On a certain class of minds, however, these Raphaelesque and other sacred paintings of high order, have had, of late

* Luther had no dislike of religious art on principle. Even the stove in his chamber was wrought with sacred subjects. See Mrs. Stowe's Sunny Memories.

years, another kind of influence, much resembling that which they had at first on the most pious Romanists. They are used to excite certain conditions of religious dream or reverie; being again, as in earliest times, regarded not as representations of fact, but as expressions of sentiment respecting the fact. In this way the best of them have unquestionably much purifying and enchanting power; and they are helpful opponents to sinful passion and weakness of every kind. A fit of unjust anger, petty malice, unreasonable vexation, or dark passion, cannot certainly, in a mind of ordinary sensibility, hold its own in the presence of a good engraving from any work of Angelico, Memling, or Perugino. But I nevertheless believe, that he who trusts much to such helps will find them fail him at his need; and that the dependence, in any great degree, on the presence or power of a picture, indicates a wonderfully feeble sense of the presence and power of God. I do not think that any man, who is thoroughly certain that Christ is in the room, will care what sort of pictures of Christ he has on its walls; and, in the plurality of cases, the delight taken in art of this kind is, in reality, nothing more than a form of graceful indulgence of those sensibilities which the habits of a disciplined life restrain in other directions. Such art is, in a word, the opera and drama of the monk. Sometimes it is worse than this, and the love of it is the mask under which a general thirst for morbid excitement will pass itself for religion. The young lady who rises in the middle of the day, jaded by her last night's ball, and utterly incapable of any simple or wholesome religious exercise, can still gaze into the dark eyes of the Madonna di San Sisto, or dream over the whiteness of an ivory crucifix, and returns to the course of her daily life in full persuasion that her morning's feverishness has atoned for her evening's folly. And all the while, the art which possesses these very doubtful advantages is acting for undoubtful detri

ment, in the various ways above examined, on the inmost fastnesses of faith; it is throwing subtle endearments round foolish traditions, confusing sweet fancies with sound doctrines, obscuring real events with unlikely semblances, and enforcing false assertions with pleasant circumstantiality, until, to the usual, and assuredly sufficient, difficulties standing in the way of belief, its votaries have added a habit of sentimentally changing what they know to be true, and of dearly loving what they confess to be false.

Has there, then (the reader asks emphatically), been *no* true religious ideal? Has religious art never been of any service to mankind? I fear, on the whole, not. Of true religious ideal, representing events historically recorded, with solemn effort at a sincere and unartificial conception, there exist, as yet, hardly any examples. Nearly all good religious pictures fall into one or other branch of the false ideal already examined, either into the Angelican (passionate ideal) or the Raphaelesque (philosophical ideal). But there is one true form of religious art, nevertheless, in the pictures of the passionate ideal which represent imaginary beings of another world. Since it is evidently right that we should try to imagine the glories of the next world, and as this imagination must be, in each separate mind, more or less different, and unconfined by any laws of material fact, the passionate ideal has not only full scope here, but it becomes our duty to urge its powers to its utmost, so that every condition of beautiful form and color may be employed to invest these scenes with greater delightfulness (the whole being, of course, received as an assertion of possibility, not of absolute fact). All the paradises imagined by the religious painters—the choirs of glorified saints, angels, and spiritual powers, when painted with full belief in this possibility of their existence, are true ideals; and so far from our having dwelt on these too much, I believe,

rather, we have not trusted them enough, nor accepted them enough, as possible statements of most precious truth. Nothing but unmixed good can accrue to any mind from the contemplation of Orcagna's Last Judgment or his triumph of death, of Angelico's Last Judgment and Paradise, or any of the scenes laid in heaven by the other faithful religious masters; and the more they are considered, not as works of art, but as real visions of real things, more or less imperfectly set down, the more good will be got by dwelling upon them. The same is true of all representations of Christ as a living presence among us now, as in Hunt's Light of the World.

The examination of the various degrees in which sacred art has reached its proper power is not to our present purpose; still less, to investigate the infinitely difficult question of its past operation on the Christian mind; it being enough here to mark the forms of ideal error, without historically tracing their extent, and to state generally that my impression is, up to the present moment, that the best religious art has been *hitherto* rather a fruit, and attendant sign, of sincere Christianity than a promoter of or help to it. More, I think, has always been done for God by few words than many pictures, and more by few acts than many words.

I must not, however, quit the subject without insisting on the chief practical consequence of what we have observed, namely, that sacred art, so far from being exhausted, has yet to attain the development of its highest branches; and the task, or privilege, yet remains for mankind, to produce an art which shall be at once entirely skilful and entirely *sincere*. All the histories of the Bible are, in my judgment, yet waiting to be painted. Moses has never been painted; Elijah never; David never (except as a mere ruddy stripling); Deborah never; Gideon never; Isaiah never. What single example does the reader remember of painting which suggested so

much as the faintest shadow of these people, or of their deeds? Strong men in armor, or aged men with flowing beards, he *may* remember, who, when he looked at his Louvre or Uffizii catalogue, he found were intended to stand for David or for Moses. But does he suppose that, if these pictures had suggested to him the feeblest image of the presence of such men, he would have passed on, as he assuredly did, to the next picture,—representing, doubtless, Diana and Actæon, or Cupid and the Graces, or a gambling quarrel in a pothouse,—with no sense of pain, or surprise? Let him meditate over the matter, and he will find ultimately that what I say is true, and that religious art, at once complete and sincere, never yet has existed.

It will exist: nay, I believe the era of its birth has come, and that those bright Turnerian imageries, which the European public declared to be "dotage," and those calm Pre-Raphaelite studies which, in like manner, it pronounced "puerility," form the first foundation that has been ever laid for true sacred art. Of this we shall presently reason farther. But, be it as it may, if we would cherish the hope that sacred art may, indeed, arise for *us*, two separate cautions are to be addressed to the two opposed classes of religionists whose influence will chiefly retard that hope's accomplishment. The group calling themselves Evangelical ought no longer to render their religion an offence to men of the world by associating it only with the most vulgar forms of art. It is not necessary that they should admit either music or painting into religious service; but, if they admit either the one or the other, let it not be bad music nor bad painting: it is certainly in nowise more for Christ's honor that His praise should be sung discordantly, or His miracles painted discreditably, than that His word should be preached ungramma-

tically. Some Evangelicals, however, seem to take a morbid pride in the triple degradation.*

The opposite class of men, whose natural instincts lead them to mingle the refinements of art with all the offices and practices of religion, are to be warned, on the contrary, how they mistake their enjoyments for their duties, or confound poetry with faith. I admit that it is impossible for one man to judge another in this matter, and that it can never be said with certainty how far what seems frivolity may be force, and what seems the indulgence of the heart may be, indeed, its dedication. I am ready to believe that Metastasio, expiring in a canzonet, may have died better than if his prayer had been in unmeasured syllables.† But, for the most part, it is

* I do not know anything more humiliating to a man of common sense, than to open what is called an "Illustrated Bible" of modern days. See, for instance, the plates in Brown's Bible (octavo: Edinburgh, 1840) a standard evangelical edition. Our habit of reducing the Psalms to doggrel before we will condescend to sing them, is a parallel abuse. It is marvellous to think that human creatures with tongues and souls should refuse to chant the verse: "Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up thy strength, and come and help us;" preferring this:—

"Behold, how Benjamin expects,
With Ephraim and Manasseh joined,
In their deliverance, the effects
Of thy resistless strength to find!"

† "En 1780, âgé de quatre-vingt-deux ans, au moment de recevoir le viatique, il rassembla ses forces, et chanta, à son Créateur:

'Eterno Genitor
Io t' offro il proprio figlio
Che in pegno del tuo amor
Si vuole a me donar.
A lui rivolgi il ciglio,
Mira chi t' offro; e poi,
Niega, Signor, se puoi,
Niega di perdonar.'"

—De Stendhal, *Via de Metastasio.*

assuredly much to be feared lest we mistake a surrender to the charms of art for one to the service of God; and, in the art which we permit, lest we substitute sentiment for sense, grace for utility. And for us all there is in this matter even a deeper danger than that of indulgence. There is the danger of Artistical Pharisaism. Of all the forms of pride and vanity, as there are none more subtle, so I believe there are none more sinful, than those which are manifested by the Pharisees of art. To be proud of birth, of place, of wit, of bodily beauty, is comparatively innocent, just because such pride is more natural, and more easily detected. But to be proud of our sanctities; to pour contempt upon our fellows, because, forsooth, we like to look at Madonnas in bowers of roses, better than at plain pictures of plain things; and to make this religious art of ours the expression of our own perpetual self-complacency,—congratulating ourselves, day by day, on our purities, proprieties, elevations, and inspirations, as above the reach of common mortals,—this I believe to be one of the wickedest and foolishest forms of human egotism; and, truly, I had rather, with great, thoughtless, humble Paul Veronese, make the Supper at Emmaus a background for two children playing with a dog (as, God knows, men do usually put it in the background to everything, if not out of sight altogether), than join that school of modern Germanism which wears its pieties for decoration as women wear their diamonds, and flaunts the dry fleeces of its phylacteries between its dust and the dew of heaven.

When we pass to the examination of what is beautiful and expressive in art, we shall frequently find distinctive qualities in the minds even of inferior artists, which have led them to the pursuit and embodying of particular trains of thought, altogether different from those which direct the compositions of other

men, and incapable of comparison with them. Now, when this is the case, we should consider it in the highest degree both invidious and illogical, to say of such different modes of exertion of the intellect, that one is in all points greater or nobler than another. We shall probably find something in the working of all minds which has an end and a power peculiar to itself, and which is deserving of free and full admiration, without any reference whatsoever to what has, in other fields, been accomplished by other modes of thought, and directions of aim. We shall, indeed, find a wider range and grasp in one man than in another; but yet it will be our own fault if we do not discover something in the most limited range of mind which is different from, and in its way better than, anything presented to us by the more grasping intellect. We all know that the nightingale sings more nobly than the lark; but who, therefore, would wish the lark not to sing, or would deny that it had a character of its own, which bore a part among the melodies of creation no less essential than that of the more richly-gifted bird? And thus we shall find and feel that whatever difference may exist between the intellectual powers of one artist and another, yet wherever there is any true genius, there will be some peculiar lesson which even the humblest will teach us more sweetly and perfectly than those far above them in prouder attributes of mind; and we should be as mistaken as we should be unjust and invidious, if we refused to receive this their peculiar message with gratitude and veneration, merely because it was a sentence and not a volume. But the case is different when we examine their relative fidelity to given facts. That fidelity depends on no peculiar modes of thought or habits of character; it is the result of keen sensibility, combined with high powers of memory and association. These qualities, as such, are the same in all men; character or feeling may direct their choice to this or that object, but the fidelity with

which they treat either the one or the other, is dependent on those simple powers of sense and intellect which are like and comparable in all, and of which we can always say that they are greater in this man, or less in that, without reference to the character of the individual.

I believe there is nearly as much occasion, at the present day, for advocacy of Michael Angelo against the pettiness of the moderns, as there is for support of Turner against the conventionalities of the ancients. For, though the names of the fathers of sacred art are on all our lips, our faith in them is much like that of the great world in its religion—nominal, but dead. In vain our lecturers sound the name of Raffaelle in the ears of their pupils, while their own works are visibly at variance with every principle deducible from his. In vain is the young student compelled to produce a certain number of school copies of Michael Angelo, when his bread must depend on the number of gewgaws he can crowd into his canvas. And I could with as much zeal exert myself against the modern system of English historical art, as I have in favor of our school of landscape, but that it is an ungrateful and painful task to attack the works of living painters, struggling with adverse circumstances of every kind, and especially with the false taste of a nation which regards matters of art either with the ticklishness of an infant, or the stolidity of a Megatherium.

Now, there is but one grand style, in the treatment of all subjects whatsoever, and that style is based on the *perfect* knowledge, and consists in the simple, unencumbered rendering, of the specific characters of the given object, be it man, beast, or flower. Every change, caricature, or abandonment of such specific character, is as destructive of grandeur as it is of truth, of beauty as of propriety. Every alteration of the features of nature has its origin either in powerless indolence

or blind audacity, in the folly which forgets, or the insolence which desecrates, works which it is the pride of angels to know, and their privilege to love.

Painting, or art generally, as such, with all its technicalities, difficulties, and particular ends, is nothing but a noble and expressive language, invaluable as the vehicle of thought, but by itself nothing. He who has learned what is commonly considered the whole art of painting, that is, the art of representing any natural object faithfully, has as yet only learned the language by which his thoughts are to be expressed. He has done just as much towards being that which we ought to respect as a great painter, as a man who has learned how to express himself grammatically and melodiously has towards being a great poet. The language is, indeed, more difficult of acquirement in the one case than in the other, and possesses more power of delighting the sense, while it speaks to the intellect, but it is, nevertheless, nothing more than language, and all those excellences which are peculiar to the painter as such, are merely what rhythm, melody, precision and force are in the words of the orator and the poet, necessary to their greatness, but not the tests of their greatness. It is not by the mode of representing and saying, but by what is represented and said, that the respective greatness either of the painter or the writer is to be finally determined.

Speaking with strict propriety, therefore, we should call a man a great painter only as he excelled in precision and force in the language of lines, and a great versifier, as he excelled in precision or force in the language of words. A great poet would then be a term strictly, and in precisely the same sense applicable to both, if warranted by the character of the images or thoughts which each in their respective languages conveyed.

Take, for instance, one of the most perfect poems or pictures (I use the words as synonymous) which modern times have seen :—the "Old Shepherd's Chief-mourner." Here the exquisite execution of the glossy and crisp hair of the dog, the bright sharp touching of the green bough beside it, the clear painting of the wood of the coffin and the folds of the blanket, are language—language clear and expressive in the highest degree. But the close pressure of the dog's breast against the wood, the convulsive clinging of the paws, which has dragged the blanket off the trestle, the total powerlessness of the head laid, close and motionless, upon its folds, the fixed and tearful fall of the eye in its utter hopelessness, the rigidity of repose which marks that there has been no motion nor change in the trance of agony since the last blow was struck on the coffin-lid, the quietness and gloom of the chamber, the spectacles marking the place where the Bible was last closed, indicating how lonely has been the life—how unwatched the departure of him who is now laid solitary in his sleep ;—these are all thoughts—thoughts by which the picture is separated at once from hundreds of equal merit, as far as mere painting goes, by which it ranks as a work of high art, and stamps its author, not as the neat imitator of the texture of a skin, or the fold of a drapery, but as the Man of Mind.

It must be the part of the judicious critic carefully to distinguish what is language, and what is thought, and to rank and praise pictures chiefly for the latter, considering the former as a totally inferior excellence, and one which cannot be compared with nor weighed against thought in any way nor in any degree whatsoever. The picture which has the nobler and more numerous ideas, however awkwardly expressed, is a greater and a better picture than that which has the less noble and less numerous ideas, however beautifully expressed. No weight, nor mass, nor beauty of execution can outweigh one

grain or fragment of thought. Three penstrokes of Raffaelle are a greater and a better picture than the most finished work that ever Carlo Dolci polished into inanity. A finished work of a great artist is only better than its sketch, if the sources of pleasure belonging to color and realization—valuable in themselves,—are so employed as to increase the impressiveness of the thought. But if one atom of thought has vanished, all color, all finish, all execution, all ornament, are too dearly bought. Nothing but thought can pay for thought, and the instant that the increasing refinement or finish of the picture begins to be paid for by the loss of the faintest shadow of an idea, that instant all refinement or finish is an excrescence, and a deformity.

I think that all the sources of pleasure, or any other good, to be derived from works of art, may be referred to five distinct heads.

I. Ideas of Power.—The perception or conception of the mental or bodily powers by which the work has been produced.

II. Ideas of Imitation.—The perception that the thing produced resembles something else.

III. Ideas of Truth.—The perception of faithfulness in a statement of facts by the thing produced.

IV. Ideas of Beauty.—The perception of beauty, either in the thing produced, or in what it suggests or resembles.

V. Ideas of Relation.—The perception of intellectual relations, in the thing produced, or in what it suggests or resembles.

I shall briefly distinguish the nature and effects of each of these classes of ideas.

I. Ideas of Power.—These are the simple perception of the mental or bodily powers exerted in the production of any work of art. According to the dignity and degree of the

power perceived is the dignity of the idea; but the whole class of ideas is received by the intellect, and they excite the best of the moral feelings, veneration, and the desire of exertion. Men may let their great powers lie dormant, while they employ their mean and petty powers on mean and petty objects; but it is physically impossible to employ a great power, except on a great object. Consequently, wherever power of any kind or degree has been exerted, the marks and evidence of it are stamped upon its results: it is impossible that it should be lost or wasted, or without record, even in the "estimation of a hair:" and therefore, whatever has been the subject of a great power, bears about with it the image of that which created it, and is what is commonly called "excellent." And this is the true meaning of the word excellent, as distinguished from the terms, "beautiful," "useful," "good," etc.; and we shall always, in future, use the word excellent, as signifying that the thing to which it is applied required a great power for its production.

## II. IDEAS OF IMITATION.

Whenever anything looks like what it is not, the resemblance being so great as *nearly* to deceive, we feel a kind of pleasurable surprise, an agreeable excitement of mind, exactly the same in its nature as that which we receive from juggling. Whenever we perceive this in something produced by art, that is to say, whenever the work is seen to resemble something which we know it is not, we receive what I call an idea of imitation. *Why* such ideas are pleasing, it would be out of our present purpose to inquire; we only know that there is no man who does not feel pleasure in his animal nature from gentle surprise,

and that such surprise can be excited in no more distinct manner than by the evidence that a thing is not what it appears to be. Now two things are requisite to our complete and more pleasurable perception of this: first, that the resemblance be so perfect as to amount to a deception; secondly, that there be some means of proving at the same moment that it *is* a deception. The most perfect ideas and pleasures of imitation are, therefore, when one sense is contradicted by another, both bearing as positive evidence on the subject as each is capable of alone; as when the eye says a thing is round, and the finger says it is flat; they are, therefore, never felt in so high a degree as in painting, where appearance of projection, roughness, hair, velvet, etc., are given with a smooth surface, or in wax-work, where the first evidence of the senses is perpetually contradicted by their experience; but the moment we come to marble, our definition checks us, for a marble figure does not look like what it is not; it looks like marble, and like the form of a man, but then it *is* marble, and it *is* the form of a man. It does not look like a man, which it is not, but like the form of a man, which it is. Form is form, *bonâ fide* and actual, whether in marble or in flesh—not an imitation or resemblance of form, but real form. The chalk outline of the bough of a tree on paper, is not an imitation; it looks like chalk and paper—not like wood, and that which it suggests to the mind is not properly said to be *like* the form of a bough, it *is* the form of a bough.

### III.—IDEAS OF TRUTH.

The word truth, as applied to art, signifies the faithful statement, either to the mind or senses, of any fact of nature.

We receive an idea of truth, then, when we perceive the faithfulness of such a statement.

The difference between ideas of truth and of imitation lies chiefly in the following points.

First,—Imitation can only be of something material, but truth has reference to statements both of the qualities of material things, and of emotions, impressions, and thoughts. There is a moral as well as material truth,—a truth of impression as well as of form,—of thought as well as of matter; and the truth of impression and thought is a thousand times the more important of the two. Hence, truth is a term of universal application, but imitation is limited to that narrow field of art which takes cognizance only of material things.

Secondly,—Truth may be stated by any signs or symbols which have a definite signification in the minds of those to whom they are addressed, although such signs be themselves no image nor likeness of anything. Whatever can excite in the mind the conception of certain facts, can give ideas of truth, though it be in no degree the imitation or resemblance of those facts. If there be—we do not say there is,—but if there be in painting anything which operates, as words do, not by resembling anything, but by being taken as a symbol and substitute for it, and thus inducing the effect of it, then this channel of communication can convey uncorrupted truth, though it do not in any degree resemble the facts whose conception it induces. But ideas of imitation, of course, require the likeness of the object. They speak to the perceptive faculties only: truth to the conceptive.

Thirdly,—And in consequence of what is above stated, an idea of truth exists in the statement of *one* attribute of anything, but an idea of imitation requires the resemblance of as many attributes as we are usually cognizant of in its real presence.

The other day at Bruges, while I was endeavoring to set

down in my notebook something of the ineffeable expression of the Madonna in the cathedral, a French amateur came up to me, to inquire if I had seen the modern French pictures in a neighboring church. I had not, but felt little inclined to leave my marble for all the canvas that ever suffered from French brushes. My apathy was attacked with gradually increasing energy of praise. Rubens never executed—Titian never colored anything like them. I thought this highly probable, and still sat quiet. The voice continued at my ear. "Parbleu, Monsieur, Michel Ange n'a rien produit de plus beau!" "De plus *beau?*" repeated I, wishing to know what particular excellences of Michael Angelo were to be intimated by this expression. "Monsieur, on ne peut plus—c'est un tableau admirable—inconcevable: Monsieur," said the Frenchman, lifting up his hands to heaven, as he concentrated in one conclusive and overwhelming proposition the qualities which were to outshine Rubens and overpower Buonaroti,—"Monsieur, IL SORT!"

This gentleman could only perceive two truths—flesh color and projection. These constituted his notion of the perfection of painting; because they unite all that is necessary for deception. He was not therefore cognizant of many ideas of truth, though perfectly cognizant of ideas of imitation.

## IV.—IDEAS OF BEAUTY.

Ideas of beauty are among the noblest which can be presented to the human mind, invariably exalting and purifying it according to their degree; and it would appear that we are intended by the Deity to be constantly under their influence, because there is not one single object in nature which is not capable of conveying them, and which, to the rightly perceiving mind,

does not present an incalculably greater number of beautiful than of deformed parts; there being in fact scarcely anything, in pure, undiseased nature, like positive deformity, but only degrees of beauty, or such slight and rare points of permitted contrast as may render all around them more valuable by their opposition; spots of blackness in creation, to make its colors felt.

## V.—IDEAS OF RELATION.

Under this head must be arranged everything productive of expression, sentiment, and character, whether in figures or landscapes, (for there may be as much definite expression and marked carrying out of particular thoughts in the treatment of inanimate as of animate nature,) everything relating to the conception of the subject and to the congruity and relation of its parts; not as they enhance each other's beauty by known and constant laws of composition, but as they give each other expression and meaning, by particular application, requiring distinct thought to discover or to enjoy: the choice, for instance, of a particular lurid or appalling light, to illustrate an incident in itself terrible, or of a particular tone of pure color to prepare the mind for the expression of refined and delicate feeling; and, in a still higher sense, the invention of such incidents and thoughts as can be expressed in words as well as on canvas, and are totally independent of any means of art but such as may serve for the bare suggestion of them. The principal object in the foreground of Turner's "Building of Carthage" is a group of children sailing toy boats. The exquisite choice of this incident, as expressive of the ruling passion, which was to be the source of future greatness, in preference to the tumult of busy stone-masons or arming soldiers, is quite as appreciable

when it is told as when it is seen,—it has nothing to do with the technicalities of painting; a scratch of the pen would have conveyed the idea and spoken to the intellect as much as the elaborate realizations of color. Such a thought as this is something far above all art; it is epic poetry of the highest order.

By the term "ideas of relation," then, I mean in future to express all those sources of pleasure, which involve and require, at the instant of their perception, active exertion of the intellectual powers.

Sublimity is not a specific term,—not a term descriptive of the effect of a particular class of ideas. Anything which elevates the mind is sublime, and the elevation of mind is produced by the contemplation of greatness of any kind; but chiefly, of course, by the greatness of the noblest things. Sublimity is, therefore, only another word for the effect of greatness upon the feelings. Greatness of matter, space, power, virtue, or beauty, are thus all sublime; and there is perhaps no desirable quality of a work of art, which in its perfection is not, in some way or degree, sublime.

I am fully prepared to allow of much ingenuity in Burke's theory of the sublime, as connected with self-preservation. There are few things so great as death; and there is perhaps nothing which banishes all littleness of thought and feeling in an equal degree with its contemplation. Everything, therefore, which in any way points to it, and, therefore, most dangers and powers over which we have little control, are in some degree sublime. But it is not the fear, observe, but the contemplation of death; not the instinctive shudder and struggle of self-preservation, but the deliberate measurement of the doom, which are really great or sublime in feeling. It is not while we shrink, but while we defy, that we receive or convey the highest conceptions of the fate. There is no sublimity in the agony of terror. Whether do we trace it most in the cry

to the mountains, "fall on us," and to the hills, "cover us," or in the calmness of the prophecy—"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God?" A little reflection will easily convince any one, that so far from the feelings of self-preservation being necessary to the sublime, their greatest action is totally destructive of it; and that there are few feelings less capable of its perception than those of a coward. But the simple conception or idea of greatness of suffering or extent of destruction is sublime, whether there be any connection of that idea with ourselves or not. If we were placed beyond the reach of all peril or pain, the perception of these agencies in their influence on others would not be less sublime, not because peril or pain are sublime in their own nature, but because their contemplation, exciting compassion or fortitude, elevates the mind, and renders meanness of thought impossible.

The truths of nature are one eternal change—one infinite variety. There is no bush on the face of the globe exactly like another bush;—there are no two trees in the forest whose boughs bend into the same network, nor two leaves on the same tree which could not be told one from the other, nor two waves in the sea exactly alike. And out of this mass of various, yet agreeing beauty, it is by long attention only that the conception of the constant character—the ideal form—hinted at by all, yet assumed by none, is fixed upon the imagination for its standard of truth.

It is not singular, therefore, nor in any way disgraceful, that the majority of spectators are totally incapable of appreciating the truth of nature, when fully set before them; but it is both singular and disgraceful that it is so difficult to convince them of their own incapability. Ask the connoisseur, who has scampered over all Europe, the shape of the leaf of an elm, and the chances are ninety to one that he cannot tell

you; and yet he will be voluble of criticism on every painted landscape from Dresden to Madrid, and pretend to tell you whether they are like nature or not. Ask an enthusiastic chatterer in the Sistine Chapel, how many ribs he has, and you get no answer; but it is odds that you do not get out of the door without his informing you that he considers such and such a figure badly drawn!

A few such interrogations as these might indeed convict, if not convince the mass of spectators of incapability, were it not for the universal reply, that they can recognize what they cannot describe, and feel what is truthful, though they do not know what is truth. And this is, to a certain degree, true; a man may recognize the portrait of his friend, though he cannot, if you ask him apart, tell you the shape of his nose or the height of his forehead; and every one could tell Nature herself from an imitation; why not then, it will be asked, what is like her from what is not? For this simple reason, that we constantly recognize things by their least important attributes, and by help of very few of those: and if these attributes exist not in the imitation, though there may be thousands of others far higher and more valuable, yet if those be wanting, or imperfectly rendered, by which we are accustomed to recognize the object, we deny the likeness.

Mrs. Jameson somewhere mentions the exclamation of a lady of her acquaintance, more desirous to fill a pause in conversation than abundant in sources of observation: "What an excellent book the Bible is!" This was a very general truth indeed; a truth predicable of the Bible in common with many other books, but it certainly is neither striking nor important. Had the lady exclaimed—"How evidently is the Bible a divine revelation!" she would have expressed a particular truth, one predicable of the Bible only; but certainly far more interesting and important. Had she, on the con

trary, informed us that the Bible was a book, she would have been still more general, and still less entertaining. If I ask any one who somebody else is, and receive for answer that he is a man, I get little satisfaction for my pains; but if I am told that he is Sir Isaac Newton, I immediately thank my neighbor for his information. The fact is, and the above instances may serve at once to prove it if it be not self-evident, that generality gives importance to the *subject*, and limitation or particularity to the *predicate*. If I say that such and such a man in China is an opium eater, I say nothing very interesting, because my subject (such a man) is particular. If I say that all men in China are opium eaters, I say something interesting, because my subject (all men) is general. If I say that all men in China eat, I say nothing interesting, because my predicate (eat) is general. If I say that all men in China eat opium, I say something interesting, because my predicate (eat opium) is particular.

Now almost everything which (with reference to a given subject) a painter has to ask himself whether he shall represent or not, is a predicate. Hence in art, particular truths are usually more important than general ones.

What should we think of a poet who should keep all his life repeating the same thought in different words? and why should we be more lenient to the parrot-painter who has learned one lesson from the page of nature, and keeps stammering it out with eternal repetition without turning the leaf? Is it less tautology to describe a thing over and over again with lines, than it is with words? The teaching of nature is as varied and infinite as it is constant; and the duty of the painter is to watch for every one of her lessons, and to give (for human life will admit of nothing more) those in which she has manifested each of her principles in the most peculiar and striking way. The deeper his research and the rarer the phe-

nomena he has noted, the more valuable will his works be; to repeat himself, even in a single instance, is treachery to nature, for a thousand human lives would not be enough to give one instance of the perfect manifestation of each of her powers; and as for combining or classifying them, as well might a preacher expect in one sermon to express and explain every divine truth which can be gathered out of God's revelation, as a painter expect in one composition to express and illustrate every lesson which can be received from God's creation. Both are commentators on infinity, and the duty of both is to take for each discourse one essential truth, seeking particularly and insisting especially on those which are less palpable to ordinary observation, and more likely to escape an indolent research; and to impress that, and that alone, upon those whom they address, with every illustration that can be furnished by their knowledge, and every adornment attainable by their power. And the real truthfulness of the painter is in proportion to the number and variety of the facts he has so illustrated; those facts being always, as above observed, the realization, not the violation of a general principle. The quantity of truth is in proportion to the number of such facts, and its value and instructiveness in proportion to their rarity. All really great pictures, therefore, exhibit the general habits of nature, manifested in some peculiar, rare, and beautiful way.

By Locke's definition of bodies, only bulk, figure, situation, and motion or rest of solid parts, are primary qualities. Hence all truths of color sink at once into the second rank. He, therefore, who has neglected a truth of form for a truth of color, has neglected a greater truth for a less one.

And that color is indeed a most unimportant characteristic of objects, will be farther evident on the slightest consideration. The color of plants is constantly changing with the season, and of everything with the quality of light falling on it;

but the nature and essence of the thing are independent of these changes. An oak is an oak, whether green with spring or red with winter; a dahlia is a dahlia, whether it be yellow or crimson; and if some monster-hunting botanist should ever frighten the flower blue, still it will be a dahlia; but let one curve of the petals—one groove of the stamens be wanting, and the flower ceases to be the same. Let the roughness of the bark and the angles of the boughs be smoothed or diminished, and the oak ceases to be an oak; but let it retain its inward structure and outward form, and though its leaves grew white, or pink, or blue, or tri-color, it would be a white oak, or a pink oak, or a republican oak, but an oak still. Again, color is hardly ever even a *possible* distinction between two objects of the same species. Two trees, of the same kind, at the same season, and of the same age, are of absolutely the same color; but they are not of the same form, nor anything like it. There can be no difference in the color of two pieces of rock broken from the same place; but it is impossible they should be of the same form. So that form is not only the chief characteristic of species, but the only characteristic of individuals of a species. Again, a color, in association with other colors, is different from the same color seen by itself. It has a distinct and peculiar power upon the retina dependent on its association. Consequently, the color of any object is not more dependent upon the nature of the object itself, and the eye beholding it, than on the color of the objects near it; in this respect also, therefore, it is no characteristic.

Invention is in landscape nothing more than appropriate recollection—(good in proportion as it is distinct.) Then let the details of the foreground be separately studied, especially those plants which appear peculiar to the place: if any one, however unimportant, occurs there, which occurs not elsewhere, it should occupy a prominent position; for the other

details, the highest examples of the ideal forms* or characters which he requires are to be selected by the artist from his

* "Talk of improving nature when it *is* nature—Nonsense."—*E. V. Rippingille.* I have not yet spoken of the difference—even in what we commonly call Nature—between imperfect and ideal form: the study of this difficult question must, of course, be deferred until we have examined the nature of our impressions of beauty; but it may not be out of place here to hint at the want of care in many of our artists to distinguish between the real work of nature and the diseased results of man's interference with her. Many of the works of our greatest artists have for their subjects nothing but hacked and hewn remnants of farm-yard vegetation, branded root and branch, from their birth, by the prong and the pruning-hook; and the feelings once accustomed to take pleasure in such abortions, can scarcely become perceptive of forms truly ideal. I have just said (417) that young painters should go to nature trustingly,—rejecting nothing, and selecting nothing: so they should; but they must be careful that it *is* nature to whom they go—nature in her liberty—not as servant-of-all-work in the hands of the agriculturist, nor stiffened into court-dress by the landscape gardener. It must be the pure, wild volition and energy of the creation which they follow—not subdued to the furrow, and cicatrized to the pollard—not persuaded into proprieties, nor pampered into diseases. Let them work by the torrent side, and in the forest shadows; not by purling brooks and under "tonsile shades." It is impossible to enter here into discussion of what man can or cannot do, by assisting natural operations: it is an intricate question: nor can I, without anticipating what I shall have hereafter to advance, show how or why it happens that the race horse is *not* the artist's ideal of a horse, nor a prize tulip his ideal of a flower; but so it is. As far as the painter is concerned, man never touches nature but to spoil; he operates on her as a barber would on the Apollo; and if he sometimes increases some particular power or excellence,—strength or agility in the animal, tallness, or fruitfulness, or solidity in the tree,—he invariably loses that *balance* of good qualities which is the chief sign of perfect specific form; above all, he destroys the appearance of free *volition* and *felicity*, which, as I shall show hereafter, is one of the essential characters of organic beauty. Until, however, I can enter into the discussion of the nature of beauty, the only advice I can safely give the young painter, is to keep clear of clover-fields and parks, and to hold to the unpenetrated forest and the unfurrowed hill. There he will find that every influence is noble,

former studies, or fresh studies made expressly for the purpose, leaving as little as possible—beyond their connection and arrangement—to mere imagination. When his picture is perfectly realized in all its parts, let him dash as much of it out as he likes; throw, if he will, mist around it, darkness, or dazzling and confused light—whatever, in fact, impetuous feeling or vigorous imagination may dictate or desire; the forms, once so laboriously realized, will come out, whenever they do occur, with a startling and impressive truth, which the uncertainty in which they are veiled will enhance rather than diminish, and the imagination strengthened by discipline, and fed with truth, will achieve the utmost of creation that is possible to finite mind.

Our landscapes are all descriptive, not reflective; agreeable and conversational, but not impressive nor didactic. They have no other foundation than

> "That vivacious versatility,
> Which many people take for want of heart.
> They err; 'tis merely what is called 'mobility;'
> A thing of temperament, and *not of art*,
> *Though seeming so from its supposed facility.*
> * * * * *
> This makes your actors, *artists*, and romancers;
> Little that's great—but much of what is clever."

Only it is to be observed that—in painters—this vivacity is *not* always versatile. It is to be wished that it were, but it is

even when destructive—that decay itself is beautiful,—and that, in the elaborate and lovely composition of all things, if at first sight it seem less studied than the works of men, the appearance of Art is only prevented by the presence of Power.

> "Nature never did betray
> The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege
> Through all the years of this our life to lead
> From joy to joy."

no such easy matter to be versatile in painting. Shallowness of thought insures not its variety, nor rapidity of production its originality.

Let then every picture be painted with earnest intention of impressing on the spectator some elevated emotion, and exhibiting to him some one particular, but exalted, beauty. Let a real subject be carefully selected, in itself suggestive of, and replete with, this feeling and beauty. All repetition is degradation of the art; it reduces it from headwork to handwork; and indicates something like a persuasion on the part of the artist that nature is exhaustible or art perfectible; perhaps, even, by him exhausted and perfected. All copyists are contemptible, but the copyist of himself the most so, for he has the worst original.

In the range of inorganic nature, I doubt if any object can be found more perfectly beautiful than a fresh, deep snow-drift, seen under warm light. Its curves are of inconceivable perfection and changefulness, its surface and transparency alike exquisite, its light and shade of inexhaustible variety and inimitable finish, the shadows sharp, pale, and of heavenly color, the reflected lights intense and multitudinous, and mingled with the sweet occurrences of transmitted light. No mortal hand can approach the majesty or loveliness of it, yet it is possible by care and skill at least to suggest the preciousness of its forms and intimate the nature of its light and shade; but this has never been attempted; it could not be done except by artists of a rank exceedingly high, and there is something about the feeling of snow in ordinary scenery which such men do not like. But when the same qualities are exhibited on a magnificent Alpine scale and in a position where they interfere with no feeling of life, I see not why they should be neglected, as they have hitherto been, unless

that the difficulty of reconciling the brilliancy of snow with a picturesque light and shade, is so great that most good artists disguise or avoid the greater part of upper Alpine scenery, and hint at the glacier so slightly, that they do not feel the necessity of careful study of its forms. Habits of exaggeration increase the evil: I have seen a sketch from nature, by one of the most able of our landscape painters, in which a cloud had been mistaken for a snowy summit, and the hint thus taken exaggerated, as was likely, into an enormous mass of impossible height, and unintelligent form, when the mountain itself, for which the cloud had been mistaken, though subtending an angle of about eighteen or twenty degrees, instead of the fifty attributed to it, was of a form so exquisite that it might have been a profitable lesson truly studied to Phidias. Nothing but failure can result from such methods of sketching, nor have I ever seen a single instance of an earnest study of snowy mountains by any one. Hence, wherever they are introduced, their drawing is utterly unintelligent, the forms being those of white rocks, or of rocks lightly powdered with snow, showing sufficiently that not only the painters have never studied the mountain carefully from below, but that they have never climbed into the snowy region.

A man accustomed to the broad, wild sea-shore, with its bright breakers, and free winds, and sounding rocks, and eternal sensation of tameless power, can scarcely but be angered when Claude bids him stand still on some paltry, chipped and chiselled quay, with porters and wheelbarrows running against him, to watch a weak, rippling, bound and barriered water, that has not strength enough in one of its waves to upset the flower-pots on the wall, or even to fling one jet of spray over the confining stone. A man accustomed to the strength and glory of God's mountains, with their soaring and radiant pin-

nacles, and surging sweeps of measureless distance, kingdoms in their valleys, and climates upon their crests, can scarcely but be angered when Salvator bids him stand still under some contemptible fragment of splintery crag, which an Alpine snow-wreath would smother in its first swell, with a stunted bush or two growing out of it, and a volume of manufactory smoke for a sky. A man accustomed to the grace and infinity of nature's foliage, with every vista a cathedral, and every bough a revelation, can scarcely but be angered when Poussin mocks him with a black round mass of impenetrable paint, diverging into feathers instead of leaves, and supported on a stick instead of a trunk. The fact is, there is one thing wanting in all the doing of these men, and that is the very virtue by which the work of human mind chiefly rises above that of the Daguerreotype or Calotype, or any other mechanical means that ever have been or may be invented, Love: There is no evidence of their ever having gone to nature with any thirst, or receive from her such emotion as could make them, even for an instant, lose sight of themselves; there is in them neither earnestness nor humility; there is no simple or honest record of any single truth; none of the plain words nor straight efforts that men speak and make when they once feel.

Nor is it only by the professed landscape painters that the great verities of the material world are betrayed: Grand as are the motives of landscape in the works of the earlier and mightier men, there is yet in them nothing approaching to a general view nor complete rendering of natural phenomena; not that they are to be blamed for this; for they took out of nature that which was fit for their purpose, and their mission was to do no more; but we must be cautious to distinguish that imaginative abstraction of landscape which alone we find in them, from the entire statement of truth which has been attempted by the moderns. I have said in the chapter on

symmetry in the second volume, that all landscape grandeur vanishes before that of Titian and Tintoret; and this is true of whatever these two giants touched;—but they touched little. A few level flakes of chestnut foliage; a blue abstraction of hill forms from Cadore or the Euganeans; a grand mass or two of glowing ground and mighty herbage, and a few burning fields of quiet cloud were all they needed; there is evidence of Tintoret's having felt more than this, but it occurs only in secondary fragments of rock, cloud, or pine, hardly noticed among the accumulated interest of his human subject. From the window of Titian's house at Venice, the chain of the Tyrolese Alps is seen lifted in spectral power above the tufted plain of Treviso; every dawn that reddens the towers of Murano lights also a line of pyramidal fires along that colossal ridge; but there is, so far as I know, no evidence in any of the master's works of his ever having beheld, much less felt, the majesty of their burning. The dark firmament and saddened twilight of Tintoret are sufficient for their end; but the sun never plunges behind San Giorgio in Aliga without such retinue of radiant cloud, such rest of zoned light on the green lagoon, as never received image from his hand.

The modern Italians will paint every leaf of a laurel or rose-bush without the slightest feeling of their beauty or character; and without showing one spark of intellect or affection from beginning to end. Anything is better than this; and yet the very highest schools *do* the same thing, or nearly so, but with totally different motives and perceptions, and the result is divine. On the whole, I conceive that the extremes of good and evil lie with the finishers, and that whatever glorious power we may admit in men like Tintoret, whatever attractiveness of method to Rubens, Rembrandt, or, though in far less degree, our own Reynolds, still the thoroughly great men

are those who have done everything thoroughly, and who, in a word, have never despised any thing, however small, of God's making. And this is the chief fault of our English landscapists, that they have not the intense all-observing penetration of well-balanced mind; they have not, except in one or two instances, anything of that feeling which Wordsworth shows in the following lines:—

> "So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive;—
> Would that the little flowers were born to live
> Conscious of half the pleasure which they give.
> That to this mountain daisy's self were known
> *The beauty of its star-shaped shadow, thrown*
> *On the smooth surface of this naked stone.*"

That is a little bit of good, downright, foreground painting—no mistake about it; daisy, and shadow, and stone texture and all. Our painters must come to this before they have done their duty; and yet, on the other hand, let them beware of finishing, for the sake of finish, all over their picture. The ground is not to be all over daisies, nor is every daisy to have its star-shaped shadow; there is as much finish in the right concealment of things as in the right exhibition of them; and while I demand this amount of specific character where nature shows it, I demand equal fidelity to her where she conceals it.

But the painter who really loves nature will not, on this account, give you a faded and feeble image, which indeed may appear to you to be right, because your feelings can detect no discrepancy in its parts, but which he knows to derive its apparent truth from a systematized falsehood. No; he will make you understand and feel that art *cannot* imitate nature—that where it appears to do so, it must malign her, and mock her. He will give you, or state to you, such truths as are in his power, completely and perfectly; and those which

he cannot give, he will leave to your imagination. If you are acquainted with nature, you will know all he has given to be true, and you will supply from your memory and from your heart that light which he cannot give. If you are unacquainted with nature, seek elsewhere for whatever may happen to satisfy your feelings; but do not ask for the truth which you would not acknowledge and could not enjoy.

And must it ever be otherwise with painting, for otherwise it has ever been. Her subjects have been regarded as mere themes on which the artist's power is to be displayed; and that power, be it of imitation, composition, idealization, or of whatever other kind, is the chief object of the spectator's observation. It is man and his fancies, man and his trickeries, man and his inventions,—poor, paltry, weak, self-sighted man, which the connoisseur for ever seeks and worships. Among potsherds and dunghills, among drunken boors and withered beldames, through every scene of debauchery and degradation, we follow the erring artist, not to receive one wholesome lesson, not to be touched with pity, nor moved with indignation, but to watch the dexterity of the pencil, and gloat over the glittering of the hue.

I speak not only of the works of the Flemish School—I wage no war with their admirers; they may be left in peace to count the spiculæ of haystacks and the hairs of donkeys—it is also of works of real mind that I speak,—works in which there are evidences of genius and workings of power,—works which have been held up as containing all of the beautiful that art can reach or man conceive. And I assert with sorrow, that all hitherto done in landscape, by those commonly conceived its masters, has never prompted one holy thought in the minds of nations. It has begun and ended in exhibiting the dexterities of individuals, and conventionalities of systems. Filling

the world with the honor of Claude and Salvator, it has never once tended to the honor of God.

Does the reader start in reading these last words, as if they were those of wild enthusiasm,—as if I were lowering the dignity of religion by supposing that its cause could be advanced by such means? His surprise proves my position. It *does* sound like wild, like absurd enthusiasm, to expect any definite moral agency in the painters of landscape; but ought it so to sound? Are the gorgeousness of the visible hue, the glory of the realized form, instruments in the artist's hand so ineffective, that they can answer no nobler purpose than the amusement of curiosity, or the engagement of idleness? Must it not be owing to gross neglect or misapplication of the means at his command, that while words and tones (means of representing nature surely less powerful than lines and colors) can kindle and purify the very inmost souls of men, the painter can only hope to entertain by his efforts at expression, and must remain for ever brooding over his incommunicable thoughts?

The cause of the evil lies, I believe, deep-seated in the system of ancient landscape art; it consists, in a word, in the painter's taking upon him to modify God's works at his pleasure, casting the shadow of himself on all he sees, constituting himself arbiter where it is honor to be a disciple, and exhibiting his ingenuity by the attainment of combinations whose highest praise is that they are impossible.

Every herb and flower of the field has its specific, distinct, and perfect beauty; it has its peculiar habitation, expression, and function. The highest art is that which seizes this specific character, which developes and illustrates it, which assigns to it its proper position in the landscape, and which, by means of it, enhances and enforces the great impression which the picture is intended to convey.

Again, it does not follow that because such accurate know-

ledge is *necessary* to the painter that it should constitute the painter; nor that such knowledge is valuable in itself, and without reference to high ends. Every kind of knowledge may be sought from ignoble motives, and for ignoble ends; and in those who so possess it, it is ignoble knowledge; while the very same knowledge is in another mind an attainment of the highest dignity, and conveying the greatest blessing. This is the difference between the mere botanist's knowledge of plants, and the great poet's or painter's knowledge of them. The one notes their distinctions for the sake of swelling his herbarium; the other, that he may render them vehicles of expression and emotion.

## CHIAROSCURO.

Go out some bright sunny day in winter, and look for a tree with a broad trunk, having rather delicate boughs hanging down on the sunny side, near the trunk. Stand four or five yards from it, with your back to the sun. You will find that the boughs between you and the trunk of the tree are very indistinct, that you confound them in places with the trunk itself, and cannot possibly trace one of them from its insertion to its extremity. But the shadows which they cast upon the trunk, you will find clear, dark, and distinct, perfectly traceable through their whole course, except when they are interrupted by the crossing boughs. And if you retire backwards, you will come to a point where you cannot see the intervening boughs at all, or only a fragment of them here and there, but can still see their shadows perfectly plain. Now, this may serve to show you the immense prominence and importance of shadows where there is anything like bright light. They are, in fact, commonly far more conspicuous than

the thing which casts them, for being as large as the casting object, and altogether made up of a blackness deeper than the darkest part of the casting object, (while that object is also broken up with positive and reflected lights,) their large, broad, unbroken spaces, tell strongly on the eye, especially as all form is rendered partially, often totally invisible within them, and as they are suddenly terminated by the sharpest lines which nature ever shows. For no outline of objects whatsoever is so sharp as the edge of a close shadow. Put your finger over a piece of white paper in the sun, and observe the difference between the softness of the outline of the finger itself and the decision of the edge of the shadow. And note also the excessive gloom of the latter. A piece of black cloth, laid in the light, will not attain one-fourth of the blackness of the paper under the shadow.

Hence shadows are in reality, when the sun is shining, the most conspicuous thing in a landscape, next to the highest lights. All forms are understood and explained chiefly by their agency: the roughness of the bark of a tree, for instance, is not seen in the light, nor in the shade; it is only seen between the two, where the shadows of the ridges explain it. And hence, if we have to express vivid light, our very first aim must be to get the shadows sharp and visible.

The second point to which I wish at present to direct attention has reference to the *arrangement* of light and shade. It is the constant habit of nature to use both her highest lights and deepest shadows in exceedingly small quantity; always in points, never in masses. She will give a large mass of tender light in sky or water, impressive by its quantity, and a large mass of tender shadow relieved against it, in foliage, or hill, or building; but the light is always subdued if it be extensive—the shadow always feeble if it be broad. She will then fill up all the rest of her picture with middle

tints and pale grays of some sort or another, and on this quiet and harmonious whole, she will touch her high lights in spots —the foam of an isolated wave—the sail of a solitary vessel —the flash of the sun from a wet roof—the gleam of a single white-washed cottage—or some such sources of local brilliancy, she will use so vividly and delicately as to throw everything else into definite shade by comparison. And then taking up the gloom, she will use the black hollows of some overhanging bank, or the black dress of some shaded figure, or the depth of some sunless chink of wall or window, so sharply as to throw everything else into definite light by comparison; thus reducing the whole mass of her picture to a delicate middle tint, approaching, of course, here to light, and there to gloom; but yet sharply separated from the utmost degrees either of the one or the other. None are in the right road to real excellence, but those who are struggling to render the simplicity, purity, and inexhaustible variety of nature's own chiaroscuro in open, cloudless daylight, giving the expanse of harmonious light—the speaking, decisive shadow—and the exquisite grace, tenderness, and grandeur of aerial opposition of local color and equally illuminated lines. No chiaroscuro is so difficult as this; and none so noble, chaste, or impressive. On this part of the subject, however, I must not enlarge at present. I wish now only to speak of those great principles of chiaroscuro, which nature observes, even when she is most working for effect—when she is playing with thunderclouds and sunbeams, and throwing one thing out and obscuring another, with the most marked artistical feeling and intention;—even then, she never forgets her great rule, to give precisely the same quantity of deepest shade which she does of highest light, and no more; points of the one answering to points of the other, and both vividly conspicuous and separated from all the rest of the landscape.

### TINTORET'S MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS.

Of Raffaelle's treatment of the massacre of the innocents, Fuseli affirms that, "in dramatic gradation he disclosed all the mother through every image of pity and of terror." If this be so, I think the philosophical spirit has prevailed over the imaginative. The imagination never errs, it sees all that is, and all the relations and bearings of it, but it would not have confused the mortal frenzy of maternal terror with various development of maternal character. Fear, rage, and agony, at their utmost pitch, sweep away all character: humanity itself would be lost in maternity, the woman would become the mere personification of animal fury or fear. For this reason all the ordinary representations of this subject are, I think, false and cold: the artist has not heard the shrieks, nor mingled with the fugitives, he has sat down in his study to twist features methodically, and philosophize over insanity. Not so Tintoret. Knowing or feeling, that the expression of the human face was in such circumstances not to be rendered, and that the effort could only end in an ugly falsehood, he denies himself all aid from the features, he feels that if he is to place himself or us in the midst of that maddened multitude, there can be no time allowed for watching expression. Still less does he depend on details of murder or ghastliness of death; there is no blood, no stabbing or cutting, but there is an awful substitute for these in the chiaroscuro. The scene is the outer vestibule of a palace, the slippery marble floor is fearfully barred across by sanguine shadows, so that our eyes seem to become bloodshot and strained with strange horror and deadly vision; a lake of life before them, like the burning seen of the doomed Moabite on the water that came by the way of Edom; a huge flight of stairs, without parapet, descends on the left; down this rush a

crowd of women mixed with the murderers; the child in the arms of one has been seized by the limbs, she hurls herself over the edge, and falls head downmost, dragging the child out of the grasp by her weight;—she will be dashed dead in a second: two others are farther in flight, they reach the edge of a deep river,—the water is beat into a hollow by the force of their plunge;—close to us is the great struggle, a heap of the mothers entangled in one mortal writhe with each other and the swords, one of the murderers dashed down and crushed beneath them, the sword of another caught by the blade and dragged at by a woman's naked hand; the youngest and fairest of the women, her child just torn away from a death grasp and clasped to her breast with the grip of a steel vice, falls backwards helplessly over the heap, right on the sword points; all knit together and hurled down in one hopeless, frenzied, furious abandonment of body and soul in the effort to save. Their shrieks ring in our ears till the marble seems rending around us, but far back at the bottom of the stairs, there is something in the shadow like a heap of clothes. It is a woman, sitting quiet,—quite quiet—still as any stone, she looks down steadfastly on her dead child, laid along on the floor before her, and her hand is pressed softly upon her brow.

All the parts of a noble work must be separately imperfect; each must imply, and ask for all the rest, and the glory of every one of them must consist in its relation to the rest, neither while so much as one is wanting can any be right. And it is evidently impossible to conceive in each separate feature, a certain want or wrongness which can only be corrected by the other features of the picture, (not by one or two merely, but by all,) unless together with the want, we conceive also of what is wanted, that is of all the rest of the work or picture. Hence Fuseli:—

"Second thoughts are admissible in painting and poetry only as dressers of the first conception; no great idea was ever formed in fragments."

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### THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST.

Tintoret has thrown into it his utmost strength, and it becomes noble in his hands by his most singularly imaginative expression, not only of the immediate fact, but of the whole train of thought of which it is suggestive; and by his considering the baptism not only as the submission of Christ to the fulfilment of all righteousness, but as the opening of the earthly struggle with the prince of the powers of the air, which instantly beginning in the temptation, ended only on the cross.

The river flows fiercely under the shadow of a great rock. From its opposite shore, thickets of close, gloomy foliage rise against the rolling chasm of heaven, through which breaks the brightness of the descending Spirit. Across these, dividing them asunder, is stretched a horizontal floor of flaky cloud, on which stand the hosts of heaven. Christ kneels upon the water, and does not sink; the figure of St. John is indistinct, but close beside his raised right arm there is a spectre in the black shade; the fiend, harpy-shaped, hardly seen, glares down upon Christ with eyes of fire, waiting his time. Beneath this figure there comes out of the mist a dark hand, the arm unseen, extended to a net in the river, the spars of which are in the shape of a cross. Behind this the roots and under stems of the trees are cut away by the cloud, and beneath it, and through them, is seen a vision of wild, melancholy, boundless light, the sweep of the desert, and the figure of Christ is seen therein alone, with his arms lifted as in supplication or ecstacy, borne of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

## THE IDEAL OF HUMANITY.

The right ideal is to be reached, we have asserted, only by the banishment of the immediate signs of sin upon the countenance and body. How, therefore, are the signs of sin to be known and separated?

No intellectual operation is here of any avail. There is not any reasoning by which the evidences of depravity are to be traced in movements of muscle or forms of feature; there is not any knowledge, nor experience, nor diligence of comparison that can be of avail. Here, as throughout the operation of the theoretic faculty, the perception is altogether moral, an instinctive love and clinging to the lines of light. Nothing but love can read the letters, nothing but sympathy catch the sound, there is no pure passion that can be understood or painted except by pureness of heart; the foul or blunt feeling will see itself in everything, and set down blasphemies.

God has employed certain colors in His creation as the unvarying accompaniment of all that is purest, most innocent, and most precious; while for things precious only in material uses, or dangerous, common colors are reserved. Consider for a little while what sort of a world it would be if all flowers were grey, all leaves black, and the sky *brown*. Observe how constantly innocent things are bright in color; look at a dove's neck, and compare it with the grey back of a viper; I have often heard talk of brilliantly colored serpents; and I suppose there are such,—as there are gay poisons, like the foxglove and kalmia—types of deceit; but all the venomous serpents I have really *seen* are grey, brick-red, or brown, variously mottled; and the most awful serpent I have seen, the Egyptian asp, is precisely of the color of gravel, or only a little greyer. So,

again, the crocodile and alligator are grey, but the innocent lizard green and beautiful. I do not mean that the rule is invariable, otherwise it would be more convincing than the lessons of the natural universe are intended ever to be; there are beautiful colors on the leopard and tiger, and in the berries of the nightshade; and there is nothing very notable in brilliancy of color either in sheep or cattle (though, by the way, the velvet of a brown bull's hide in the sun, or the tawny white of the Italian oxen, is, to my mind, lovelier than any leopard's or tiger's skin): but take a wider view of nature, and compare generally rainbows, sunrises, roses, violets, butterflies, birds, gold-fish, rubies, opals, and corals, with alligators, hippopotami, lions, wolves, bears, swine, sharks, slugs, bones, fungi, fogs, and corrupting, stinging, destroying things in general, and you will feel then how the question stands between the colorists and chiaroscurists,—which of them have nature and life on their side, and which have sin and death.

We have been speaking hitherto of what is constant and necessary in nature, of the ordinary effects of daylight on ordinary colors, and we repeat again, that no gorgeousness of the pallet can reach even these. But it is a widely different thing when nature herself takes a coloring fit, and does something extraordinary, something really to exhibit her power. She has a thousand ways and means of rising above herself, but incomparably the noblest manifestations of her capability of color are in the sunsets among the high clouds. I speak especially of the moment before the sun sinks, when his light turns pure rose-color, and when this light falls upon a zenith covered with countless cloudforms of inconceivable delicacy, threads and flakes of vapor, which would in common daylight be pure snow white, and which give therefore fair field to the tone of light. There is then no limit to the multitude, and no

check to the intensity of the hues assumed. The whole sky from the zenith to the horizon becomes one molten, mantling sea of color and fire; every black bar turns into massy gold, every ripple and wave into unsullied, shadowless crimson, and purple, and scarlet, and colors for which there are no words in language, and no ideas in the mind,—things which can only be conceived while they are visible,—the intense hollow blue of the upper sky melting through it all,—showing here deep, and pure, and lightless, there, modulated by the filmy, formless body of the transparent vapor, till it is lost imperceptibly in its crimson and gold.

The concurrence of circumstances necessary to produce the sunsets of which I speak does not take place above five or six times in a summer, and then only for a space of from five to ten minutes, just as the sun reaches the horizon. Considering how seldom people think of looking for sunset at all, and how seldom, if they do, they are in a position from which it can be fully seen, the chances that their attention should be awake, and their position favorable, during these few flying instants of the year, is almost as nothing. What can the citizen, who can see only the red light on the canvas of the wagon at the end of the street, and the crimson color of the bricks of his neighbor's chimney, know of the flood of fire which deluges the sky from the horizon to the zenith? What can even the quiet inhabitant of the English lowlands, whose scene for the manifestation of the fire of heaven is limited to the tops of hayricks, and the rooks' nests in the old elm-trees, know of the mighty passages of splendor which are tossed from Alp to Alp over the azure of a thousand miles of champaign? Even granting the constant vigor of observation, and supposing the possession of such impossible knowledge, it needs but a moment's reflection to prove how incapable the memory is of retaining for any time the distinct image of the sources even

of its most vivid impressions. What recollection have we of the sunsets which delighted us last year? We may know that they were magnificent, or glowing, but no distinct image of color or form is retained—nothing of whose *degree* (for the great difficulty with the memory is to retain, not facts, but *degrees* of fact) we could be so certain as to say of anything now presented to us, that it is like it. If we did say so, we should be wrong; for we may be quite certain that the energy of an impression fades from the memory, and becomes more and more indistinct every day; and thus we compare a faded and indistinct image with the decision and certainty of one present to the senses.

Recognition is no proof of real and intrinsic resemblance. We recognise our books by their bindings, though the true and essential characteristics lie inside. A man is known to his dog by the smell—to his tailor by the coat—to his friend by the smile: each of these knows him, but how little, or how much, depends on the dignity of the intelligence. That which is truly and indeed characteristic of the man, is known only to God.

One portrait of a man may possess exact accuracy of feature, and no atom of expression; it may be, to use the ordinary terms of admiration bestowed on such portraits by those whom they please, "as like as it can stare." Everybody, down to his cat, would know this. Another portrait may have neglected or misrepresented the features, but may have given the flash of the eye, and the peculiar radiance of the lip, seen on him only in his hours of highest mental excitement. None but his friends would know this. Another may have given none of his ordinary expressions, but one which he wore in the most excited instant of his life, when all his secret passions and all his highest powers were brought into play at

once. None but those who had then seen him might recognise *this* as like. But which would be the most truthful portrait of the *man?* The first gives the accidents of body, the sport of climate, and food, and time—which corruption inhabits, and the worm waits for. The second gives the stamp of the soul on the flesh; but it is the soul seen in the emotions which it shares with many—which may not be characteristic of its essence—the results of habit, and education, and accident; a gloze, whether purposely worn, or unconsciously assumed, perhaps totally contrary to all that is rooted and real in the mind that it conceals. The third has caught the trace of all that was most hidden and most mighty, when all hypocrisy, and all habit, and all petty and passing emotion —the ice, and the bank and the foam of the immortal river—were shivered and broken, and swallowed up in the awakening of its inward strength; when the call and claim of some divine motive had brought into visible being those latent forces and feelings which the spirit's own volition could not summon, nor its consciousness comprehend; which God only knew, and God only could awaken,—the depth and the mystery of its peculiar and separating attributes.

In a man, to be short-legged or long-nosed, or anything else of accidental quality, does not distinguish him from other short-legged or long-nosed animals; but the important truths respecting a man are, first, the marked development of that distinctive organization which separates him as man from other animals, and secondly, that group of qualities which distinguish the individual from all other men, which make him Paul or Judas, Newton or Shakspeare.

That habit of the old and great painters of introducing portrait into all their highest works, I look to, not as error in

them, but as the very source and root of their superiority in all things, for they were too great and too humble not to see in every face about them that which was above them, and which no fancies of theirs could match nor take place of; wherefore we find the custom of portraiture constant with them, both portraiture of study and for purposes of analysis, as with Leonardo; and actual, professed, serviceable, hard-working portraiture of the men of their time, as with Raffaelle, and Titian, and Tintoret.

There is not any greater sign of the utter want of vitality and hopefulness in the schools of the present day than that unhappy prettiness and sameness under which they mask, or rather for which they barter, in their lentile thirst, all the birthright and power of nature, which prettiness, wrought out and spun fine in the study, out of empty heads, till it hardly betters the blocks on which dresses and hair are tried in barbers' windows and milliners' books, cannot but be revolting to any man who has his eyes, even in a measure, open to the divinity of the immortal seal on the common features that he meets in the highways and hedges hourly and momentarily, outreaching all efforts of conception as all power of realization, were it Raffaelle's three times over, even when the glory of the wedding garment is not there.

Public taste, I believe, as far as it is the encourager and supporter of art, has been the same in all ages,—a fitful and vacillating current of vague impression, perpetually liable to change, subject to epidemic desires, and agitated by infectious passion, the slave of fashion, and the fool of fancy, but yet always distinguishing with singular clearsightedness, between that which is best and that which is worst of the particular class of food which its morbid appetite may call for; never failing to

distinguish that which is produced by intellect, from that which is not, though it may be intellect degraded by ministering to its misguided will. Public taste may thus degrade a race of men capable of the highest efforts in art into the portrait painters of ephemeral fashions, but it will yet not fail of discovering who among these portrait painters is the man of the most mind. It will separate the man who would have become Buonaroti from the man who would have become Bandinelli, though it will employ both in painting curls, and feathers, and bracelets. Hence, generally speaking, there is no *comparative* injustice done, no false elevation of the fool above the man of mind, provided only that the man of mind will condescend to supply the particular article which the public chooses to want. Of course a thousand modifying circumstances interfere with the action of the general rule; but, taking one case with another, we shall very constantly find the price which the picture commands in the market a pretty fair standard of the artist's rank of intellect. The press, therefore, and all who pretend to lead the public taste, have not so much to direct the multitude whom to go to, as what to ask for. Their business is not to tell us which is our best painter, but to tell us whether we are making our best painter do his best.

Now none are capable of doing this, but those whose principles of judgment are based both on thorough *practical* knowledge of art, and on broad general views of what is true and right, without reference to what has been done at one time or another, or in one school or another. Nothing can be more perilous to the cause of art, than the constant ringing in our painters' ears of the names of great predecessors, as their examples or masters.

One of the most morbid symptoms of the general taste of the present day, is a too great fondness for unfinished works. Brilliancy and rapidity of execution are everywhere sought as

the highest good, and so that a picture be cleverly handled as far as it is carried, little regard is paid to its imperfection as a whole. Hence some artists are permitted, and others compelled, to confine themselves to a manner of working altogether destructive of their powers, and to tax their energies, not to concentrate the greatest quantity of thought on the least possible space of canvas, but to produce the greatest quantity of glitter and clap-trap in the shortest possible time. To the idler and the trickster in art, no system can be more advantageous; but to the man who is really desirous of doing something worth having lived for—to a man of industry, energy, or feeling, we believe it to be the cause of the most bitter discouragement. If ever, working upon a favorite subject or a beloved idea, he is induced to tax his powers to the utmost, and to spend as much time upon his picture as he feels necessary for its perfection, he will not be able to get so high a price for the result, perhaps, of a twelvemonth's thought, as he might have obtained for half a dozen sketches with a forenoon's work in each, and he is compelled either to fall back upon mechanism, or to starve. Now the press should especially endeavor to convince the public, that by this purchase of imperfect pictures they not only prevent all progress and development of high talent, and set tricksters and mechanics on a level with men of mind, but defraud and injure themselves.

There is no doubt whatever, that, estimated merely by the quantity of pleasure it is capable of conveying, a well-finished picture is worth to its possessor half-a-dozen incomplete ones; and that a perfect drawing is, simply as a source of delight, better worth a hundred guineas than a drawing half as finished is worth thirty. On the other hand, the body of our artists should be kept in mind, that by indulging the public with rapid and unconsidered work, they are not only depriving themselves of the benefit which each picture ought to render

to them, as a piece of practice and study, but they are destroying the refinement of general taste, and rendering it impossible for themselves ever to find a market for more careful works, supposing that they were inclined to execute them. Nor need any single artist be afraid of setting the example, and producing labored works, at advanced prices, among the cheap, quick drawings of the day. The public will soon find the value of the complete work, and will be more ready to give a large sum for that which is inexhaustible, than a quota of it for that which they are wearied of in a month. The artist who never lets the price command the picture, will soon find the picture command the price. And it ought to be a rule with every painter never to let a picture leave his easel while it is yet capable of improvement, or of having more thought put into it. The general effect is often perfect and pleasing, and not to be improved upon, when the details and facts are altogether imperfect and unsatisfactory. It may be difficult—perhaps the most difficult task of art—to complete these details, and not to hurt the general effect; but until the artist can do this, his art is imperfect and his picture unfinished. That only is a complete picture which has both the general wholeness and effect of nature, and the inexhaustible perfection of nature's details. And it is only in the effort to unite these that a painter really improves. By aiming only at details, he becomes a mechanic; by aiming only at generals, he becomes a trickster: his fall in both cases is sure. Two questions the artist has, therefore, to ask himself, —first, "Is my whole right?" Secondly, "Can my details be added to? Is there a single space in the picture where I can crowd in another thought? Is there a curve in it which I can modulate—a line which I can graduate—a vacancy I can fill? Is there a single spot which the eye, by any peering or prying, can fathom or exhaust? If so, my picture is imperfect.

and if, in modulating the line or filling the vacancy, I hurt the general effect, my art is imperfect."

But, on the other hand, though incomplete pictures ought neither to be produced nor purchased, *careful and real sketches* ought to be valued much more highly than they are.

If I stand by a picture in the Academy, and hear twenty persons in succession admiring some paltry piece of mechanism or imitation in the lining of a cloak, or the satin of a slipper, it is absurd to tell me that they reprobate collectively what they admire individually: or, if they pass with apathy by a piece of the most noble conception or most perfect truth, because it has in it no tricks of the brush nor grimace of expression, it is absurd to tell me that they collectively respect what they separately scorn, or that the feelings and knowledge of such judges, by any length of time or comparison of ideas, could come to any right conclusion with respect to what is really high in art. The question is not decided by them, but for them;—decided at first by few: by fewer in proportion as the merits of the work are of a higher order. From these few the decision is communicated to the number next below them in rank of mind, and by these again to a wider and lower circle; each rank being so far cognizant of the superiority of that above it, as to receive its decision with respect; until, in process of time, the right and consistent opinion is communicated to all, and held by all as a matter of faith, the more positively in proportion as the grounds of it are less perceived.*

* There are, however, a thousand modifying circumstances which render this process sometimes unnecessary,—sometimes rapid and certain—sometimes impossible. It is unnecessary in rhetoric and the drama, because the multitude is the only proper judge of those arts whose end is to move the multitude, (though more is necessary to a fine play than is essentially dramatic, and it is only of the dramatic part that the multitude are cognizant.)

But when this process has taken place, and the work has become sanctified by time in the minds of men, it is impossible

It is unnecessary, when, united with the higher qualities of a work, there are appeals to universal passion, to all the faculties and feelings which are general in man as an animal. The popularity is then as sudden as it is well grounded,—it is hearty and honest in every mind, but it is based in every mind on a different species of excellence. Such will often be the case with the noblest works of literature. Take Don Quixote for example. The lowest mind would find in it perpetual and brutal amusement in the misfortunes of the knight, and perpetual pleasure in sympathy with the squire. A mind of average feeling would perceive the satirical meaning and force of the book, would appreciate its wit, its elegance, and its truth. But only elevated and peculiar minds discover, in addition to all this, the full moral beauty of the love and truth which are the constant associates of all that is even most weak and erring in the character of its hero, and pass over the rude adventure and scurrile jest in haste—perhaps in pain, to penetrate beneath the rusty corslet, and catch from the wandering glance, the evidence and expression of fortitude, self-devotion, and universal love. So again, with the works of Scott and Byron; popularity was as instant as it was deserved, because there is in them an appeal to those passions which are universal in all men, as well as an expression of such thoughts as can be received only by the few. But they are admired by the majority of their advocates for the weakest parts of their works, as a popular preacher by the majority of his congregation for the worst part of his sermon.

The process is rapid and certain, when, though there may be little to catch the multitude at once, there is much which they can enjoy when their attention is authoritatively directed to it. So rests the reputation of Shakspeare. No ordinary mind can comprehend wherein his undisputed superiority consists, but there is yet quite as much to amuse, thrill, or excite,—quite as much of what is in the strict sense of the word, dramatic, in his works as in any one else's. They were received, therefore, when first written, with average approval, as works of common merit: but when the high decision was made, and the circle spread, the public took up the hue and cry conscientiously enough. Let them have daggers, ghosts, clowns, and kings, and with such real and definite sources of enjoyment, they will take the additional trouble to learn half a dozen quotations, without understanding them, and admit the superiority of Shakspeare without further demur.

that any new work of equal merit can be impartially compared with it, except by minds not only educated and generally capable of appreciating merit, but strong enough to shake off the weight of prejudice and association, which invariably incline them to the older favorite.

There is sublimity and power in every field of nature from the pole to the line; and though the painters of one country are often better and greater, universally, than those of another, this is less because the subjects of art are wanting anywhere, than because one country or one age breeds mighty and thinking men, and another none.

The world does, indeed, succeed—oftener than is, perhaps, altogether well for the world—in making Yes mean No, and No mean Yes. But the world has never succeeded, nor ever will, in making itself delight in black clouds more than in blue sky, or love the dark earth better than the rose that grows from it. Happily for mankind, beauty and ugliness are as positive in their nature as physical pain and pleasure, as light and darkness, or as life and death; and, though they may be denied or misunderstood in many fantastic ways, the most subtle reasoner will at least find that color and sweetness are still attractive to him, and that no logic will enable him to think the rainbow sombre, or the violet scentless. But the theory that beauty was merely a result of custom was very common in Johnson's time. Goldsmith has, I think, expressed it with more force and wit than any other writer, in various passages of the Citizen of the World. And it was, indeed, a curious retribution of the folly of the world of art, which for some three centuries had given itself recklessly to the pursuit of beauty, that at last it should be led to deny the very existence of what it had so morbidly and passionately sought. It

was as if a child should leave its home to pursue the rainbow, and then, breathless and hopeless, declare that it did not exist. Nor is the lesson less useful which may be gained in observing the adoption of such a theory by Reynolds himself. It shows how completely an artist may be unconscious of the principles of his own work, and how he may be led by instinct to *do* all that is right, while he is misled by false logic to *say* all that is wrong. For nearly every word that Reynolds wrote was contrary to his own practice; he seems to have been born to teach all error by his precept, and all excellence by his example; he enforced with his lips generalization and idealism, while with his pencil he was tracing the patterns of the dresses of the belles of his day; he exhorted his pupils to attend only to the invariable, while he himself was occupied in distinguishing every variation of womanly temper; and he denied the existence of the beautiful, at the same instant that he arrested it as it passed, and perpetuated it for ever.

The knowing of rules and the exertion of judgment have a tendency to check and confuse the fancy in its flow; so that it will follow, that, in exact proportion as a master knows anything about rules of right and wrong, he is likely to be uninventive; and in exact proportion as he holds higher rank and has nobler inventive power, he will know less of rules; not despising them, but simply feeling that between him and them there is nothing in common,—that dreams cannot be ruled—that as they come, so they must be caught, and they cannot be caught in any other shape than that they come in; and that he might as well attempt to rule a rainbow into rectitude, or cut notches in a moth's wings to hold it by, as in any wise attempt to modify, by rule, the forms of the involuntary vision.

And this, which by reason we have thus anticipated, is in reality universally so. There is no exception. The great men

never know how or why they do things. They have no rules, cannot comprehend the nature of rules;—do not, usually, even know, in what they do, what is best or what is worst: to them it is all the same; something they cannot help saying or doing,—one piece of it as good as another, and none of it (it seems to *them*) worth much. The moment any man begins to talk about rules, in whatsoever art, you may know him for a second-rate man; and, if he talks about them *much*, he is a third-rate, or not an artist at all. To *this* rule there is no exception in any art; but it is perhaps better to be illustrated in the art of music than in that of painting. I fell by chance the other day upon a work of De Stendhal's, "Vies de Haydn, de Mozart, et de Metastase," fuller of common sense than any book I ever read on the arts; though I see, by the slight references made occasionally to painting, that the author's knowledge therein is warped and limited by the elements of general teaching in the schools around him; and I have not yet, therefore, looked at what he has separately written on painting. But one or two passages out of this book on music are closely to our present purpose.

"Counterpoint is related to mathematics: a fool, with patience, becomes a respectable savant in that; but for the part of genius, melody, it has no rules. No art is so utterly deprived of precepts for the production of the beautiful. So much the better for it and for us. Cimarosa, when first at Prague his air was executed, Pria che spunti in ciel l'Aurora, never heard the pedants say to him, 'Your air is fine, because you have followed such and such a rule established by Pergolese in such an one of his airs; but it would be finer still if you had conformed yourself to such another rule from which Galluppi never deviated."

Yes: "so much the better for it, and for us;" but I trust the time will soon come when melody in painting will be

understood, no less than in music, and when people will find that, there also, the great melodists have no rules, and cannot have any, and that there are in this, as in sound, "no precepts for the production of the beautiful."

Again. "Behold, my friend, an example of that simple way of answering which embarrasses much. One asked him (Haydn) the *reason* for a harmony—for a passage's being assigned to one instrument rather than another; but all he ever answered was, 'I have done it, because it does well.'" Farther on, De Stendhal relates an anecdote of Haydn; I believe one well known, but so much to our purpose that I repeat it. Haydn had agreed to give some lessons in counterpoint to an English nobleman. "'For our first lesson,' said the pupil, already learned in the art—drawing at the same time a quatuor of Haydn's from his pocket,—'for our first lesson, may we examine this quatuor; and will you tell me the reasons of certain modulations, which I cannot entirely approve, because they are contrary to the principles?' Haydn, a little surprised, declared himself ready to answer. The nobleman began; and at the very first measures found matter for objection. Haydn, *who invented habitually*, and who was the contrary of a pedant, found himself much embarrassed, and answered always, 'I have done that because it has a good effect. I have put that passage there because it does well.' The Englishman, who judged that these answers proved nothing, recommenced his proofs, and demonstrated to him, by very good reasons, that this quatuor was good for nothing. 'But, my lord, arrange this quatuor then to your fancy,—play it so, and you will see which of the two ways is the best.' 'But why is yours the best which is contrary to the rules?' 'Because it is the pleasantest.' The nobleman replied. Haydn at last lost patience, and said, 'I see, my lord, it is you who have the goodness to give lessons to me, and truly I am forced to confess to you that I do not deserve

the honor.' The partizan of the rules departed, still astonished that in following the rules to the letter one cannot infallibly produce a 'Matrimonio Segreto.' "

This anecdote, whether in all points true or not, is in its tendency most instructive, except only in that it makes *one* false inference or admission, namely, that a good composition can be *contrary* to the rules. It may be contrary to certain principles, supposed in ignorance to be general; but every great composition is in perfect harmony with all true rules, and involves thousands too delicate for ear, or eye, or thought, to trace; still it is possible to reason, with infinite pleasure and profit, about these principles, when the thing is once done; only, all our reasoning will not enable any one to do another thing like it, because all reasoning falls infinitely short of the divine instinct. Thus we may reason wisely over the way a bee builds its comb, and be profited by finding out certain things about the angles of it. But the bee knows nothing about those matters. It builds its comb in a far more inevitable way. And, from a bee to Paul Veronese, all master-workers work with this awful, this inspired unconsciousness.

I said just now that there was no exception to *this* law, that the great men never knew how or why they did things. It is, of course, only with caution that such a broad statement should be made; but I have seen much of different kinds of artists, and I have always found the knowledge of, and attention to, rules so *accurately* in the inverse ratio to the power of the painter, that I have myself no doubt that the law is constant, and that men's smallness may be trigonometrically estimated by the attention which, in their work, they pay to principles, especially principles of composition. The general way in which the great men speak is of "*trying* to do" this or that, just as a child would tell of something he had seen and could not utter.

And this is the reason for the somewhat singular, but very palpable truth that the Chinese, and Indians, and other semi-civilized nations, can color better than we do, and that an Indian shawl or Chinese vase are still, in invention of color, inimitable by us. It is their glorious ignorance of all rules that does it; the pure and true instincts have play, and do their work,—instincts so subtle, that the least warping or compression breaks or blunts them; and the moment we begin teaching people any rules about color, and make them do this or that, we crush the instinct generally for ever. Hence, hitherto, it has been an actual necessity, in order to obtain power of coloring, that a nation should be half savage: everybody could color in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; but we were ruled and legalized into grey in the fifteenth;—only a little salt simplicity of their sea natures at Venice still keeping their precious, shell-fishy purpleness and power; and now that is gone; and nobody can color anywhere, except the Hindoos and Chinese; but that need not be so, and will not be so long; for, in a little while, people will find out their mistake, and give up talking about rules of color, and then everybody will color again, as easily as they now talk.

Such, then, being the generally passive or instinctive character of right invention, it may be asked how these unmanageable instincts are to be rendered practically serviceable in historical or poetical painting,—especially historical, in which between men who, like Horace Vernet, David, or Domenico Tintoret, would employ themselves in painting, more or less graphically, the outward verities of passing events—battles, councils, &c. —of their day (who, supposing them to work worthily of their mission, would become, properly so called, historical or narrative painters); and men who sought, in scenes of perhaps less outward importance, "noble grounds for noble emotion;"—who would be, in a certain separate sense, *poetical* painters;

some of them taking for subjects events which had actually happened, and others themes from the poets; or, better still, becoming poets themselves in the entire sense, and inventing the story as they painted it. Painting seems to me only just to be beginning, in this sense also, to take its proper position beside literature.

Finally, as far as I can observe, it is a constant law that the greatest men, whether poets or historians, live entirely in their own age, and that the greatest fruits of their work are gathered out of their own age. Dante paints Italy in the thirteenth century; Chaucer, England in the fourteenth; Masaccio, Florence in the fifteenth; Tintoret, Venice in the sixteenth; —all of them utterly regardless of anachronism and minor error of every kind, but getting always vital truth out of the vital present.

If it be said that Shakspere wrote perfect historical plays on subjects belonging to the preceding centuries, I answer, that they *are* perfect plays just because there is no care about centuries in them, but a life which all men recognise for the human life of all time; and this it is, not because Shakspere sought to give universal truth, but because, painting honestly and completely from the men about him, he painted that human nature which is, indeed, constant enough,—a rogue in the fifteenth century being, *at heart*, what a rogue is in the nineteenth and was in the twelfth; and an honest or a knightly man being, in like manner, very similar to other such at any other time. And the work of these great idealists is, therefore, always universal; not because it is *not portrait*, but because it is *complete* portrait down to the heart, which is the same in all ages: and the work of the mean idealists is *not* universal, not because it is portrait, but because it is *half* portrait, —of the outside, the manners and the dress, not of the heart. Thus Tintoret and Shakspere paint, both of them, simply

Venetian and English nature as they saw it in their time, down to the root; and it does for *all* time; but as for any care to cast themselves into the particular ways and tones of thought, or custom, of past time in their historical work, you will find it in neither of them, nor in any other perfectly great man that I know of.

If there had been no vital truth in their present, it is hard to say what these men could have done. I suppose, primarily, they would not have existed; that they, and the matter they have to treat of, are given together, and that the strength of the nation and its historians correlatively rise and fall—Herodotus springing out of the dust of Marathon. It is also hard to say how far our better general acquaintance with minor details of past history may make us able to turn the shadow on the imaginative dial backwards, and naturally to live, and even live strongly if we choose, in past periods; but this main truth will always be unshaken, that the only historical painting deserving the name is portraiture of our own living men and our own passing times,* and that all efforts to summon up the events of bygone periods, though often useful and touching, must come under an inferior class of poetical painting; nor will it, I believe, ever be much followed as their main work by the strongest men, but only by the weaker and comparatively sentimental (rather than imaginative) groups.

Suppose you have to teach two children drawing, one thoroughly clever and active-minded, the other dull and slow; and you put before them Jullien's chalk studies of heads—*études à deux crayons*—and desire them to be copied. The dull child will slowly do your bidding, blacken his paper and rub it white again, and patiently and painfully, in the course of three or four years, attain to the performance of a chalk head, not

* See Edinburgh Lectures, p. 217.

much worse than his original, but still of less value than the paper it is drawn upon. But the clever child will not, or will only by force, consent to this discipline. He finds other means of expressing himself with his pencil somehow or another; and presently you find his paper covered with sketches of his grandfather and grandmother, and uncles, and cousins,—sketches of the room, and the house, and the cat, and the dog, and the country outside, and everything in the world he can set his eyes on; and he gets on, and even his child's work has a value in it—a truth which makes it worth keeping; no one knows how precious, perhaps, that portrait of his grandfather may be, if any one has but the sense to keep it till the time when the old man can be seen no more up the lawn, nor by the wood. That child is working in the middle-age spirit—the other in the modern spirit.

But there is something still more striking in the evils which have resulted from the modern regardlessness of truth. Consider, for instance, its effect on what is called historical painting. What do you at present *mean* by historical painting? Now-a-days, it means the endeavoring, by the power of imagination, to portray some historical event of past days. But in the middle ages, it meant representing the acts of *their own* days; and that is the only historical painting worth a straw. Of all the wastes of time and sense which modernism has invented—and they are many—none are so ridiculous as this endeavor to represent past history. What do you suppose our descendants will care for our imaginations of the events of former days? Suppose the Greeks, instead of representing their own warriors as they fought at Marathon, had left us nothing but their imaginations of Egyptian battles; and suppose the Italians, in like manner, instead of portraits of Can Grande and Dante, or of Leo the Tenth and Raphael, had left us nothing but imaginary portraits of Pericles and Miltiades? What fools we

should have thought them! how bitterly we should have been provoked with their folly! And that is precisely what our descendants will feel towards us, so far as our grand historical and classical schools are concerned. What do we care, they will say, what those 19th century people fancied about Greek and Roman history! If they had left us a few plain and rational sculptures and pictures of their own battles, and their own men, in their everyday dress, we should have thanked them. Well, but, you will say, we *have* left them portraits of our great men, and paintings of our great battles. Yes, you have indeed, and that is the only historical painting that you either have or can have; but you don't *call* that historical painting. You don't thank the men who do it; you look down upon them and dissuade them from it, and tell them they don't belong to the grand schools. And yet they are the only true historical painters, and the only men who will produce any effect on their own generation, or any other. Wilkie was an historical painter, Chantrey an historical sculptor, because they painted, or carved, the veritable things and men they saw, not men and things as they believed they might have been, or should have been. But no one tells such men they are historical painters, and they are discontented with what they do; and poor Wilkie must needs travel to see the grand school, and imitate the grand school, and ruin himself. And you have had multitudes of other painters ruined, from the beginning, by that grand school. There was Etty, naturally as good a painter as ever lived, but no one told him what to paint, and he studied the antique, and the grand schools, and painted dances of nymphs in red and yellow shawls to the end of his days. Much good may they do you! He is gone to the grave, a lost mind. There was Flaxman, another naturally great man, with as true an eye for nature as Raphael,—he stumbles over the blocks of the antique statues—wanders in the dark valley of their ruins

to the end of his days. He has left you a few outlines of muscular men straddling and frowning behind round shields. Much good may they do you! Another lost mind. And of those who are lost namelessly, who have not strength enough even to make themselves known, the poor pale students who lie buried for ever in the abysses of the great schools, no account can be rendered; they are numberless.

And the wonderful thing is, that of all these men whom you now have come to call the great masters, there was *not one* who confessedly did not paint his own present world, plainly and truly. Homer sang of what he saw; Phidias carved what he saw; Raphael painted the men of his own time in their own caps and mantles; and every man who has arisen to eminence in modern times has done so altogether by his working in their way, and doing the things he saw. How did Reynolds rise? Not by painting Greek women, but by painting the glorious little living ladies this, and ladies that, of his own time. How did Hogarth rise? Not by painting Athenian follies, but London follies. Who are the men who have made an impression upon you yourselves,—upon your own age? I suppose the most popular painter of the day is Landseer. Do you suppose he studied dogs and eagles out of the Elgin Marbles? And yet in the very face of these plain, incontrovertible, all-visible facts, we go on from year to year with the base system of Academy teaching, in spite of which every one of these men has risen: I say *in spite* of the entire method and aim of our art-teaching. It destroys the greater number of its pupils altogether; it hinders and paralyses the greatest. There is not a living painter whose eminence is not in spite of everything he has been taught from his youth upwards, and who, whatever his eminence may be, has not suffered much injury in the course of his victory. For observe: this love of what is called ideality or beauty in preference to truth, operates not only in making

us choose the past rather than the present for our subjects, but it makes us falsify the present when we do take it for our subject. I said just now that portrait-painters were historical painters;—so they are; but not good ones, because not faithful ones. The beginning and end of modern portraiture is adulation. The painters cannot live but by flattery; we should desert them if they spoke honestly. And therefore we can have no good portraiture; for in the striving after that which is *not* in their model, they lose the inner and deeper nobleness which *is* in their model. I saw not long ago, for the first time, the portrait of a man whom I knew well,—a young man, but a religious man,—and one who had suffered much from sickness. The whole dignity of his features and person depended upon the expression of serene yet solemn purpose sustaining a feeble frame; and the painter, by way of flattering him, strengthened him, and made him athletic in body, gay in countenance, idle in gesture; and the whole power and being of the man himself were lost. And this is still more the case with our public portraits. You have a portrait, for instance, of the Duke of Wellington at the end of the North Bridge,—one of the thousand equestrian statues of Modernism,—studied from the show-riders of the amphitheatre, with their horses on their hind-legs in the saw-dust. Do you suppose that was the way the Duke sat when your destinies depended on him? when the foam hung from the lips of his tired horse, and its wet limbs were dashed with the bloody slime of the battle-field, and he himself sat anxious in his quietness, grieved in his fearlessness, as he watched, scythe-stroke by scythe-stroke, the gathering in of the harvest of death? You would have done something had you thus left his image in the enduring iron, but nothing now.

But the time has at last come for all this to be put an end to; and nothing can well be more extraordinary than the way

in which the men have risen who are to do it. Pupils in the same schools, receiving precisely the same instruction which for so long a time has paralysed every one of our painters,—these boys agree in disliking to copy the antique statues set before them. They copy them as they are bid, and they copy them better than any one else, they carry off prize after prize, and yet they hate their work. At last they are admitted to study from the life; they find the life very different from the antique, and say so. Their teachers tell them the antique is the best, and they mustn't copy the life. They agree among themselves that they like the life, and that copy it they will. They do copy it faithfully, and their masters forthwith declare them to be lost men. Their fellow-students hiss them whenever they enter the room. They can't help it; they join hands and tacitly resist both the hissing and the instruction. Accidentally, a few prints of the works of Giotto, a few casts from those of Ghiberti, fall into their hands, and they see in these something they never saw before—something intensely and everlastingly true. They examine farther into the matter; they discover for themselves the greater part of what I have laid before you to-night; they form themselves into a body, and enter upon that crusade which has hitherto been victorious. And which will be absolutely and triumphantly victorious. The great mistake which has hitherto prevented the public mind from fully going with them must soon be corrected. That mistake was the supposition that, instead of wishing to recur to the *principles* of the early ages, these men wished to bring back the *ignorance* of the early ages. This notion, grounded first on some hardness in their earlier works, which resulted—as it must always result—from the downright and earnest effort to paint nature as in a looking-glass, was fostered partly by the jealousy of their beaten competitors, and partly by the pure, perverse, and hopeless ignorance of the whole body of art-critics, so called,

connected with the press. No notion was ever more baseless or more ridiculous.

The first and most important kind of public buildings which we are always sure to want, are schools: and I would ask you to consider very carefully, whether we may not wisely introduce some great changes in the way of school decoration. Hitherto, as far as I know, it has either been so difficult to give all the education we wanted to our lads, that we have been obliged to do it, if at all, with cheap furniture in bare walls; or else we have considered that cheap furniture and bare walls are a proper part of the means of education; and supposed that boys learned best when they sat on hard forms, and had nothing but blank plaster about and above them whereupon to employ their spare attention; also, that it was as well they should be accustomed to rough and ugly conditions of things, partly by way of preparing them for the hardships of life, and partly that there might be the least possible damage done to floors and forms, in the event of their becoming, during the master's absence, the fields or instruments of battle. All this is so far well and necessary, as it relates to the training of country lads, and the first training of boys in general. But there certainly comes a period in the life of a well educated youth, in which one of the principal elements of his education is, or ought to be, to give him refinement of habits; and not only to teach him the strong exercises of which his frame is capable, but also to increase his bodily sensibility and refinement, and show him such small matters as the way of handling things properly, and treating them considerately. Not only so, but I believe the notion of fixing the attention by keeping the room empty, is a wholly mistaken one: I think it is just in the emptiest room that the mind wanders most; for it gets restless, like a bird, for want of a perch, and casts about for any possible

means of getting out and away. And even if it be fixed, by an effort, on the business in hand, that business becomes itself repulsive, more than it need be, by the vileness of its associations; and many a study appears dull or painful to a boy, when it is pursued on a blotted deal desk, under a wall with nothing on it but scratches and pegs, which would have been pursued pleasantly enough in a curtained corner of his father's library, or at the lattice window of his cottage. Nay, my own belief is, that the best study of all is the most beautiful; and that a quiet glade of forest, or the nook of a lake shore, are worth all the schoolrooms in Christendom, when once you are past the multiplication table; but be that as it may, there is no question at all but that a time ought to come in the life of a well trained youth, when he can sit at a writing table without wanting to throw the inkstand at his neighbor; and when also he will feel more capable of certain efforts of mind with beautiful and refined forms about him than with ugly ones. When that time comes he ought to be advanced into the decorated schools; and this advance ought to be one of the important and honorable epochs of his life.

I have not time, however, to insist on the mere serviceableness to our youth of refined architectural decoration, as such; for I want you to consider the probable influence of the particular kind of decoration which I wish you to get for them, namely, historical painting. You know we have hitherto been in the habit of conveying all our historical knowledge, such as it is, by the ear only, never by the eye; all our notions of things being ostensibly derived from verbal description, not from sight. Now, I have no doubt that, as we grow gradually wiser—and we are doing so every day—we shall discover at last that the eye is a nobler organ than the ear; and that through the eye we must, in reality, obtain, or put into form, nearly all the useful information we are to have about this world. Even as

the matter stands, you will find that the knowledge which a boy is supposed to receive from verbal description is only available to him so far as in any underhand way he gets a sight of the thing you are talking about. I remember well that, for many years of my life, the only notion I had of the look of a Greek knight was complicated between recollection of a small engraving in my pocket Pope's Homer, and reverent study of the Horse-Guards. And though I believe that most boys collect their ideas from more varied sources, and arrange them more carefully than I did; still, whatever sources they seek must always be ocular: if they are clever boys, they will go and look at the Greek vases and sculptures in the British Museum, and at the weapons in our armories—they will see what real armor is like in lustre, and what Greek armor was like in form, and so put a fairly true image together, but still not, in ordinary cases, a very living or interesting one. Now, the use of your decorative painting would be, in myriads of ways, to animate their history for them, and to put the living aspect of past things before their eyes as faithfully as intelligent invention can; so that the master shall have nothing to do but once to point to the schoolroom walls, and for ever afterwards the meaning of any word would be fixed in a boy's mind in the best possible way. Is it a question of classical dress—what a tunic was like, or a chlamys, or a peplus? At this day, you have to point to some vile woodcut, in the middle of a dictionary page, representing the thing hung upon a stick; but then, you would point to a hundred figures, wearing the actual dress, in its fiery colors, in all the actions of various stateliness or strength; you would understand at once how it fell round the people's limbs as they stood, how it drifted from their shoulders as they went, how it veiled their faces as they wept, how it covered their heads in the day of battle. *Now*, if you want to see what a weapon is like, you refer, in like manner,

to a numbered page, in which there are spearheads in rows, and sword-hilts in symmetrical groups; and gradually the boy gets a dim mathematical notion how one scymitar is hooked to the right and another to the left, and one javelin has a knob to it and another none: while one glance at your good picture would show him,—and the first rainy afternoon in the school room would for ever fix in his mind,—the look of the sword and spear as they fell or flew; and how they pierced, or bent, or shattered—how men wielded them, and how men died by them. But far more than all this, is it a question not of clothes or weapons, but of men? how can we sufficiently estimate the effect on the mind of a noble youth, at the time when the world opens to him, of having faithful and touching representations put before him of the acts and presences of great men—how many a resolution, which would alter and exalt the whole course of his after-life, might be formed, when in some dreamy twilight he met, through his own tears, the fixed eyes of those shadows of the great dead, unescapable and calm, piercing to his soul; or fancied that their lips moved in dread reproof or soundless exhortation. And if but for one out of many this were true—if yet, in a few, you could be sure that such influence had indeed changed their thoughts and destinies, and turned the eager and reckless youth, who would have cast away his energies on the race-horse or the gambling-table, to that noble life-race, that holy life-hazard, which should win all glory to himself and all good to his country —would not that, to some purpose, be "political economy of art?"

And observe, there could be no monotony, no exhaustibleness, in the scenes required to be thus portrayed. Even if there were, and you wanted for every school in the kingdom, one death of Leonidas; one battle of Marathon; one death of Cleobis and Bito; there need not therefore be more monotony in your art

than there was in the repetition of a given cycle of subjects by the religious painters of Italy. But we ought not to admit a cycle at all. For though we had as many great schools as we have great cities (one day I hope we *shall* have), centuries of painting would not exhaust, in all the number of them, the noble and pathetic subjects which might be chosen from the history of even one noble nation. But, besides this, you will not, in a little while, limit your youths' studies to so narrow fields as you do now. There will come a time—I am sure of it—when it will be found that the same practical results, both in mental discipline, and in political philosophy, are to be attained by the accurate study of mediæval and modern as of ancient history; and that the facts of mediæval and modern history are, on the whole, the most important to us. And among these noble groups of constellated schools which I foresee arising in our England, I foresee also that there will be divided fields of thought; and that while each will give its scholars a great general idea of the world's history, such as all men should possess—each will also take upon itself, as its own special duty, the closer study of the course of events in some given place or time. It will review the rest of history, but it will exhaust its own special field of it; and found its moral and political teaching on the most perfect possible analysis of the results of human conduct in one place, and at one epoch. And then, the galleries of that school will be painted with the historical scenes belonging to the age which it has chosen for its special study.

The fact is, that the greater number of persons or societies throughout Europe, whom wealth, or chance, or inheritance has put in the possession of valuable pictures, do not know a good picture from a bad one, and have no idea in what the value of a picture really consists. The reputation of certain works is raised, partly by accident, partly by the just testi-

mony of artists, partly and generally by the bad tastes of the public (no picture that I know of, has ever, in modern times, attained popularity, in the full sense of the term, without having some exceedingly bad qualities mingled with its good ones), and when this reputation has once been completely established, it little matters to what state the picture may be reduced: few minds are so completely devoid of imagination as to be unable to invest it with the beauties which they have heard attributed to it.

This being so, the pictures that are most valued are for the most part those by masters of established renown, which are highly or neatly finished, and of a size small enough to admit of their being placed in galleries or saloons, so as to be made subjects of ostentation, and to be easily seen by a crowd. For the support of the fame and value of such pictures, little more is necessary than that they should be kept bright, partly by cleaning, which is incipient destruction, and partly by what is called "restoring," that is, painting over, which is of course total destruction. Nearly all the gallery pictures in modern Europe have been more or less destroyed by one or the other of these operations, generally exactly in proportion to the estimation in which they are held; and as, originally, the smaller and more highly finished works of any great master are usually his worst, the contents of many of our most celebrated galleries are by this time, in reality, of very small value indeed.

On the other hand, the most precious works of any noble painter are usually those which have been done quickly, and in the heat of the first thought, on a large scale, for places where there was little likelihood of their being well seen, or for patrons from whom there was little prospect of rich remuneration. In general, the best things are done in this way, or else in the enthusiasm and pride of accomplishing some great pur-

pose, such as painting a Cathedral or a Campo-Santo from one end to the other, especially when the time has been short, and circumstances disadvantageous. Works thus executed are of course despised on account of their quantity, as well as their frequent slightness, in the places where they exist; and they are too large to be portable, and too vast and comprehensive to be read on the spot, in the hasty temper of the present age. They are, therefore, almost universally neglected, whitewashed by custodes, shot at by soldiers, suffered to drop from the walls piecemeal into powder and rags by society in general; but, which is an advantage more than counterbalancing all this evil, they are not often "restored." What is left of them, however fragmentary, however ruinous, however obscured and defiled, is almost always *the real thing;* there are no fresh readings: and therefore the greatest treasures of art which Europe at this moment possesses are pieces of old plaster on ruinous brick walls, where the lizards burrow and bask, and which few other living creatures ever approach; and torn sheets of dim canvass, in waste corners of churches; and mildewed stains, in the shape of human figures, on the walls of dark chambers, which now and then an exploring traveller causes to be unlocked by their tottering custode, looks hastily round, and retreats from in a weary satisfaction at his accomplished duty.

Many of the pictures on the ceilings and walls of the Ducal Palace, by Paul Veronese and Tintoret, have been more or less reduced, by neglect, to this condition. Unfortunately they are not altogether without reputation, and their state has drawn the attention of the Venetian authorities and academicians. It constantly happens, that public bodies who will not pay five pounds to preserve a picture, will pay fifty to repaint it: and when I was at Venice in 1846, there were two remedial operations carrying on at one and the same time, in the two buildings which contain the pictures of greatest value in

the city (as pieces of color, of greatest value in the world), curiously illustrative of this peculiarity in human nature. Buckets were set on the floor of the Scuola di San Rocco, in every shower, to catch the rain which came through the pictures of Tintoret on the ceiling; while in the Ducal Palace, those of Paul Veronese were themselves laid on the floor to be repainted; and I was myself present at the re-illumination of the breast of a white horse, with a brush, at the end of a stick five feet long, luxuriously dipped in a common house painters' vessel of paint.

There are, indeed, some kinds of knowledge with which an artist ought to be thoroughly furnished; those, for instance, which enable him to express himself: for this knowledge relieves instead of encumbering his mind, and permits it to attend to its purposes instead of wearying itself about means. The whole mystery of manipulation and manufacture should be familiar to the painter from a child. He should know the chemistry of all colors and materials whatsoever, and should prepare all his colors himself, in a little laboratory of his own. Limiting his chemistry to this one subject, the amount of practical science necessary for it, and such accidental discoveries as might fall in his way in the course of his work, of better colors or better modes of preparing them, would be an infinite refreshment to his mind; a minor subject of interest to which it might turn when jaded with comfortless labor, or exhausted with feverish invention, and yet which would never interfere with its higher functions, when it chose to address itself to them. Even a considerable amount of manual labor, sturdy color-grinding, and canvass-stretching, would be advantageous; though this kind of work ought to be in great part done by pupils. For it is one of the conditions of perfect knowledge in these matters, that every great master

should have a certain number of pupils, to whom he is to impart all the knowledge of materials and means which he himself possesses, as soon as possible; so that, at any rate, by the time they are fifteen years old, they may know all that he knows himself in this kind; that is to say, all that the world of artists know, and his own discoveries besides, and so never be troubled about methods any more. Not that the knowledge even of his own particular methods is to be of purpose confined to himself and his pupils, but that necessarily it must be so in some degree; for only those who see him at work daily can understand his small and multitudinous ways of practice. These cannot verbally be explained to everybody, nor is it needful that they should, only let them be concealed from nobody who cares to see them; in which case, of course, his attendant scholars will know them best.

The art of the thirteenth century is the foundation of all art,—nor merely the foundation, but the root of it; that is to say, succeeding art is not merely built upon it, but was all comprehended in it, and is developed out of it. Passing this great century, we find three successive branches developed from it, in each of the three following centuries. The fourteenth century is pre-eminently the age of *Thought*, the fifteenth the age of *Drawing*, and the sixteenth the age of *Painting*.

Observe, first, the fourteenth century is pre-eminently the age of thought. It begins with the first words of the poem of Dante;—and all the great pictorial poems—the mighty series of works in which everything is done to relate, but nothing to imitate—belong to this century. I should only confuse you by giving you the names of marvellous artists, most of them little familiar to British ears, who adorned this century in Italy; but you will easily remember it as the age of Dante and Giotto—the age of *Thought*.

The men of the succeeding century (the fifteenth), felt that they could not rival their predecessors in invention, but might excel them in execution. Original thoughts belonging to this century are comparatively rare; even Raphael and Michael Angelo themselves borrowed all their principal ideas and plans of pictures from their predecessors; but they executed them with a precision up to that time unseen. You must understand by the word "drawing," the perfect rendering of forms, whether in sculpture or painting; and then remember the fifteenth century as the age of Leonardo, Michael Angelo, Lorenzo Ghiberti, and Raphael,—pre-eminently the age of *Drawing*.

The sixteenth century produced the four greatest *Painters*, that is to say, managers of color, that the world has seen; namely, Tintoret, Paul Veronese, Titian, and Correggio. I need not say more to justify my calling it the age of *Painting*.

# Part 6.

# POETRY.

"Poetry is the expression of the beautiful—by words—the beautiful of the outer and the inner world; whatever is delectable to the eye or the ear, the every sense of the body and of the soul—it presides over *veras dulcedines rerum.* It implies at once a vision and a faculty, a gift and an art. A thought may be poetical, and yet not poetry; it may be a solution containing the poetical element, but waiting and wanting the precipitation of it, the crystallization of it."—*North British Review.*

# Part 6.

## POETRY.

I AM writing at a window which commands a view of the head of the Lake of Geneva; and as I look up from my paper, I see, beyond it, a blue breadth of softly moving water, and the outline of the mountains above Chillon, bathed in morning mist. The first verses which naturally come into my mind are—

> "A thousand feet in depth below
> The massy waters meet and flow;
> So far the fathom line was sent
> From Chillon's snow-white battlement."

Let us see in what manner this poetical statement is distinguished from a historical one.

It is distinguished from a truly historical statement, first, in being simply false. The water under the castle of Chillon is not a thousand feet deep, nor anything like it.* Herein, certainly, these lines fulfil Reynolds's first requirement in poetry, "that it should be inattentive to literal truth and minute exactness in detail." In order, however, to make our comparison more closely in other points, let us assume that what

* "MM. Mallet et Pictet, se trouvant sur le lac auprès du château de Chillon, le 6 Août, 1774, plongèrent à la profondeur de 312 pieds de un thermomètre," &c.—SAUSSURE, *Voyages dans les Alpes*, chap. ii. § 33. It appears from the next paragraph, that the thermometer was "au fond du lac."

is stated is indeed a fact, and that it was to be recorded, first historically, and then poetically.

Historically stating it, then, we should say: "The lake was sounded from the walls of the castle of Chillon, and found to be a thousand feet deep."

Now, if Reynolds be right in his idea of the difference between history and poetry, we shall find that Byron leaves out of this statement certain *un*necessary details, and retains only the invariable,—that is to say, the points which the Lake of Geneva and castle of Chillon have in common with all other lakes and castles.

Let us hear, therefore.

"A thousand feet in depth below."

"Below?" Here is, at all events, a word added (instead of anything being taken away); invariable, certainly in the case of lakes, but not absolutely necessary.

"The massy waters meet and flow."

"Massy!" why massy? Because deep water is heavy. The word is a good word, but it is assuredly an added detail, and expresses a character, not which the Lake of Geneva has in common with all other lakes, but which it has in distinction from those which are narrow or shallow.

"Meet and flow." Why meet and flow? Partly to make up a rhyme; partly to tell us that the waters are forceful as well as massy, and changeful as well as deep. Observe, a farther addition of details, and of details more or less peculiar to the spot, or, according to Reynolds's definition, of "heavy matter, retarding the progress of the imagination."

"So far the fathom line was sent."

Why fathom line? All lines for sounding are not fathom

lines. If the lake was ever sounded from Chillon, it was probably sounded in metres, not fathoms. This is an addition of another particular detail, in which the only compliance with Reynolds's requirement is, that there is some chance of its being an inaccurate one.

"From Chillon's snow-white battlement."

Why snow-white? Because castle battlements are not usually snow-white. This is another added detail, and a detail quite peculiar to Chillon, and therefore exactly the most striking word in the whole passage.

"Battlement!" why battlement? Because all walls have not battlements, and the addition of the term marks the castle to be not merely a prison, but a fortress.

This is a curious result. Instead of finding, as we expected, the poetry distinguished from the history by the omission of details, we find it consist entirely in the *addition* of details; and instead of being characterized by regard only of the invariable, we find its whole power to consist in the clear expression of what is singular and particular!

The reader may pursue the investigation for himself in other instances. He will find in every case that a poetical is distinguished from a merely historical statement, not by being more vague, but more specific, and it might, therefore, at first appear that our author's comparison should be simply reversed, and that the Dutch School should be called poetical, and the Italian historical. But the term poetical does not appear very applicable to the generality of Dutch painting; and a little reflection will show us, that if the Italians represent only the invariable, they cannot be properly compared even to historians. For that which is incapable of change has no history, and records which state only the invariable need not be written, and could not be read.

It is evident, therefore, that our author has entangled himself in some grave fallacy, by introducing this idea of invariableness as forming a distinction between poetical and historical art. We must not go on with our inquiry until we have settled satisfactorily the question already suggested to us, in what the essence of poetical treatment really consists. For though, as we have seen, it certainly involves the addition of specific details, it cannot be simply that addition which turns the history into poetry. For it is perfectly possible to add any number of details to a historical statement, and to make it more prosaic with every added word. As, for instance, "The lake was sounded out of a flat-bottomed boat, near the crab tree at the corner of the kitchen-garden, and was found to be a thousand feet nine inches deep, with a muddy bottom." It thus appears that it is not the multiplication of details which constitutes poetry; nor their subtraction which constitutes history; but that there must be something either in the nature of the details themselves, or the method of using them, which invests them with poetical power or historical propriety.

It seems to me, and may seem to the reader, strange that we should need to ask the question, "What is poetry?" Here is a word we have been using all our lives, and, I suppose, with a very distinct idea attached to it; and when I am now called upon to give a definition of this idea, I find myself at a pause. What is more singular, I do not at present recollect hearing the question often asked, though surely it is a very natural one; and I never recollect hearing it answered, or even attempted to be answered. In general, people shelter themselves under metaphors, and while we hear poetry described as an utterance of the soul, an effusion of Divinity, or voice of nature, or in other terms equally elevated and obscure, we never attain anything like a definite explana-

tion of the character which actually distinguishes it from prose.

I come, after some embarrassment, to the conclusion, that poetry is "the suggestion, by the imagination, of noble grounds for the noble emotions." I mean, by the noble emotions, those four principal secret passions—Love, Veneration, Admiration, and Joy (this latter especially, if unselfish); and their opposites—Hatred, Indignation (or Scorn), Horror, and Grief,—this last, when unselfish, becoming Compassion. These passions in their various combinations constitute what is called "poetical feeling," when they are felt on noble grounds, that is, on great and true grounds. Indignation, for instance, is a poetical feeling, if excited by serious injury; but it is not a poetical feeling if entertained on being cheated out of a small sum of money. It is very possible the manner of the cheat may have been such as to justify considerable indignation; but the feeling is nevertheless not poetical, unless the grounds of it be large as well as just. In like manner, energetic admiration may be excited in certain minds by a display of fireworks, or a street of handsome shops; but the feeling is not poetical, because the grounds of it are false, and therefore ignoble. There is in reality nothing to deserve admiration either in the firing of packets of gunpowder, or in the display of the stocks of warehouses. But admiration excited by the budding of a flower is a poetical feeling, because it is impossible that this manifestation of spiritual power and vital beauty can ever be enough admired.

Farther, it is necessary to the existence of poetry that the grounds of these feelings should be *furnished by the imagination*. Poetical feeling, that is to say, mere noble emotion, is not poetry. It is happily inherent in all human nature deserving the name, and is found often to be purest in the least sophisticated. But the power of assembling, by *the help of*

*the imagination*, such images as will excite these feelings, is the power of the poet or literally of the "Maker."*

* Take, for instance, the beautiful stanza in the "Affliction of Margaret"

"I look for ghosts, but none will force
Their way to me. 'Tis falsely said
That ever there was intercourse
Between the living and the dead;

For, surely then, I should have sight
Of him I wait for, day and night,
With love and longing infinite."

This we call Poetry, because it is invented *or made* by the writer, entering into the mind of a supposed person. Next, take an instance of the actual feeling truly experienced and simply expressed by a real person.

"Nothing surprised me more than a woman of Argentière, whose cottage I went into to ask for milk, as I came down from the glacier of Argentière, in the month of March, 1764. An epidemic dysentery had prevailed in the village, and, a few months before, had taken away from her her father, her husband, and her brothers, so that she was left alone, with three children in the cradle. Her face had something noble in it, and its expression bore the seal of a calm and profound sorrow. After having given me milk, she asked me whence I came, and what I came there to do, so early in the year. When she knew that I was of Geneva, she said to me, 'she could not believe that all Protestants were lost souls; that there were many honest people among us, and that God was too good and too great to condemn all without distinction.' Then, after a moment of reflection, she added, in shaking her head, 'But, that which is very strange, is that of so many who have gone away, none have ever returned. I,' she added, with an expression of grief, 'who have so mourned my husband and my brothers, who have never ceased to think of them, who every night conjure them with beseechings to tell me where they are, and in what state they are! Ah, surely, if they lived anywhere, they would not leave me thus! But, perhaps,' she added, 'I am not worthy of this kindness; perhaps the pure and innocent spirits of these children,' and she looked at the cradle, 'may have their presence, and the joy which is denied to *me*.'"—SAUSSURE, *Voyages dans les Alpes*, chap. xxiv.

This we do not call Poetry, merely because it is not invented, but the true utterance of a real person.

Now this power of exciting the emotions depends, of course, on the richness of the imagination, and on its choice of those images which, in combination, will be most effective, or, for the particular work to be done, most fit. And it is altogether impossible for a writer not endowed with invention to conceive what tools a true poet will make use of, or in what way he will apply them, or what unexpected results he will bring out by them; so that it is vain to say that the details of poetry ought to possess, or ever do possess, any *definite* character. Generally speaking, poetry runs into finer and more delicate details than prose; but the details are not poetical because they are more delicate, but because they are employed so as to bring out an affecting result. For instance, no one but a true poet would have thought of exciting our pity for a bereaved father by describing his way of locking the door of his house:

> "Perhaps to himself, at that moment he said,
> The key I must take, for my Ellen is dead;
> But of this in my ears not a word did he speak,
> And he went to the chase with a tear on his cheek."

In like manner, in painting, it is altogether impossible to say beforehand what details a great painter may make poetical by his use of them to excite noble emotions: and we shall, therefore, find presently that a painting is to be classed in the great or inferior schools, not according to the kind of details which it represents, but according to the uses for which it employs them.

It is only farther to be noticed, that infinite confusion has been introduced into this subject by the careless and illogical custom of opposing painting to poetry, instead of regarding poetry as consisting in a noble use, whether of colors or words. Painting is properly to be opposed to *speaking* or *writing*, but not to *poetry*. Both painting and speaking are methods of

expression. Poetry is the employment of either for the noblest purposes.

The imagination has three totally distinct functions. It combines, and by combination creates new forms; but the secret principle of this combination has not been shown by the analysts. Again, it treats, or regards, both the simple images and its own combinations in peculiar ways; and thirdly, it penetrates, analyzes, and reaches truths by no other faculty discoverable.

The essential characters of composition, properly so called, are these. The mind which desires the new feature summons up before it those images which it supposes to be of the kind wanted, of these it takes the one which it supposes to be fittest, and tries it: if it will not answer, it tries another, until it has obtained such an association as pleases it.

In this operation, if it be of little sensibility, it regards only the absolute beauty or value of the images brought before it; and takes that or those which it thinks fairest or most interesting, without any regard to their sympathy with those for whose company they are destined.

In composition the mind can only take cognizance of likeness or dissimilarity, or of abstract beauty among the ideas it brings together. But neither likeness nor dissimilarity secures harmony. We saw in the chapter on unity that likeness destroyed harmony or unity of membership, and that difference did not necessarily secure it, but only that particular imperfection in each of the harmonizing parts which can only be supplied by its fellow part. If, therefore, the combination made is to be harmonious, the artist must induce in each of its component parts (suppose two only, for simplicity's sake,) such imperfection as that the other shall put it right. If one of them be perfect by itself, the other will be an excrescence. Both must be faulty when separate, and each corrected by the presence of

the other. If he can accomplish this, the result will be beautiful; it will be a whole, an organized body with dependent members; —he is an inventor. If not, let his separate features be as beautiful, as apposite, or as resemblant as they may, they form no whole. They are two members glued together.

A powerfully imaginative mind seizes and combines at the same instant, not only two, but all the important ideas of its poem or picture, and while it works with any one of them, it is at the same instant working with and modifying all in their relations to it, never losing sight of their bearings on each other; as the motion of a snake's body goes through all parts at once, and its volition acts at the same instant in coils that go contrary ways.

This faculty is indeed something that looks as if man were made after the image of God. It is inconceivable, admirable, altogther divine.

There is however, a limit to the power of all human imagination. When the relations to be observed are absolutely necessary, and highly complicated, the mind cannot grasp them, and the esult is a total deprivation of all power of imagination associative in such matter. For this reason, no human mind has ever conceived a new animal.

We have thus far been defining that combining operation of the imagination which appears to be in a sort mechanical; we must now examine its dealings with its separate conceptions.

Its function and gift are the getting at the root, its nature and dignity depend on its holding things always by the heart. Take its hand from off the beating of that, and it will prophesy no longer; it looks not in the eyes, it judges not by the voice, it describes not by outward features, all that it affirms, judges, or describes, it affirms from within.

It drinks the very vital sap of that it deals with: once there it is at liberty to throw up what new shoots it will, so always

that the true juice and sap be in them, and to prune and twist them at its pleasure, and bring them to fairer fruit than grew on the old tree.

It may seem to the reader that I am incorrect in calling this penetrating, possession-taking faculty, imagination. Be it so, the name is of little consequence; the faculty itself, called by what name we will, I insist upon as the highest intellectual power of man. There is no reasoning in it, it works not by algebra, nor by integral calculus, it is a piercing, Pholas-like mind's tongue that works and tastes into the very rock heart, no matter what be the subject submitted to it, substance or spirit, all is alike, divided asunder, joint and marrow, whatever utmost truth, life, principle, it has, laid bare, and that which has no truth, life, nor principle, dissipated into its original smoke at a touch. The whispers at men's ears it lifts into visible angels. Vials that have lain sealed in the deep sea a thousand years it unseals, and brings out of them Genii.

Every great conception of poet or painter is held and treated by this faculty. Every character that is so much as touched by men like Æschylus, Homer, Dante, or Shakspeare, is by them held by the heart; and every circumstance or sentence of their being, speaking, or seeming, is seized by process from within, and is referred to that inner secret spring of which the hold is never lost for an instant; so that every sentence, as it has been thought out from the heart, opens for us a way down to the heart, leads us to the centre, and then leaves us to gather what more we may; it is the open sesame of a huge, obscure, endless cave, with inexhaustible treasure of pure gold scattered in it; the wandering about and gathering the pieces may be left to any of us, all can accomplish that; but the first opening of that invisible door in the rock is of the imagination only.

I believe it will be found that the entirely unimaginative mind *sees* nothing of the object it has to dwell upon or describe,

and is therefore utterly unable, as it is blind itself, to set anything before the eyes of the reader.

The fancy sees the outside, and is able to give a portrait of the outside, clear, brilliant, and full of detail.

The imagination sees the heart and inner nature, and makes them felt, but is often obscure, mysterious, and interrupted, in its giving of outer detail.

Take an instance. A writer with neither imagination nor fancy, describing a fair lip, does not see it, but thinks about it, and about what is said of it, and calls it well-turned, or rosy, or delicate, or lovely, or afflicts us with some other quenching and chilling epithet. Now hear fancy speak,—

> "Her lips were red, and one was thin,
> Compared with that was next her chin,
> Some bee had stung it newly."

The real, red, bright being of the lip is there in a moment. But it is all outside; no expression yet, no mind. Let us go a step farther with Warner, of fair Rosamond struck by Eleanor.

> "With that she dashed her on the lips
> So dyed double red;
> Hard was the heart that gave the blow,
> Soft were those lips that bled."

The tenderness of mind begins to mingle with the outside color, the imagination is seen in its awakening. Next Shelley,—

> "Lamp of life, thy lips are burning
> Through the veil that seems to hide them,
> As the radiant lines of morning
> Through thin clouds, ere they divide them."

In Milton it happens, I think, generally, and in the case before us most certainly, that the imagination is mixed and broken with fancy, and so the strength of the imagery is part of iron and part of clay.

"Bring the rathe primrose, that forsaken dies (Imagination)
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine (Nugatory)
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet— (Fancy)
The glowing violet, (Imagination)
The musk rose, and the well-attired woodbine, (Fancy, vulgar)
With cowslips wan, that hang the pensive head, (Imagination)
And every flower that sad embroidery wears." (Mixed)

Fancy, as she stays at the externals, can never feel. She is one of the hardest hearted of the intellectual faculties, or rather one of the most purely and simply intellectual. She cannot be made serious, no edge tools but she will play with; whereas the imagination is in all things the reverse. She cannot be but serious; she sees too far, too darkly, too solemnly, too earnestly, ever to smile. There is something in the heart of everything, if we can reach it, that we shall not be inclined to laugh at. The ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα of the sea is on its surface, not in the deep.

Now, observe, while, as it penetrates into the nature of things, the imagination is preëminently a beholder of things *as* they *are*, it is, in its creative function, an eminent beholder of things *when* and *where* they are NOT; a seer, that is, in the prophetic sense, calling "the things that are not as though they were," and for ever delighting to dwell on that which is not tangibly present. And its great function being the calling forth, or back, that which is not visible to bodily sense, it has of course been made to take delight in the fulfilment of its proper function, and preëminently to enjoy, and spend its energy, on things past and future, or out of sight, rather than things present, or in sight. So that if the imagination is to be called to take delight in any object, it will not be always well, if we can help it, to put the *real* object there, before it. The imagination would on the whole rather have it *not* there;—the reality and substance are rather in the imagination's way; it would think a good deal more of the thing if it could not see

it. Hence, that strange and sometimes fatal charm, which there is in all things as long as we wait for them, and the moment we have lost them; but which fades while we possess them;—that sweet bloom of all that is far away, which perishes under our touch. Yet the feeling of this is not a weakness; it is one of the most glorious gifts of the human mind, making the whole infinite future, and imperishable past, a richer inheritance, if faithfully inherited, than the changeful, frail, fleeting present; it is also one of the many witnesses in us to the truth that these present and tangible things are not meant to satisfy us. The instinct becomes a weakness only when it is weakly indulged, and when the faculty which was intended by God to give back to us what we have lost, and gild for us what is to come, is so perverted as only to darken what we possess. But, perverted or pure, the instinct itself is everlasting, and the substantial presence even of the things which we love the best, will inevitably and for ever be found wanting in *one* strange and tender charm, which belonged to the dreams of them.

Greatness in art (as assuredly in all other things, but more distinctly in this than in most of them,)is not a teachable nor gainable thing, but *the expression of the mind of a God-made great man;* that teach, or preach, or labor as you will, everlasting difference is set between one man's capacity and another's; and that this God-given supremacy is the priceless thing, always just as rare in the world at one time as another. What you can manufacture, or communicate, you can lower the price of, but this mental supremacy is incommunicable; you will never multiply its quantity, nor lower its price; and nearly the best thing that men can generally do is to set themselves, not to the attainment, but the discovery of this; learning to know gold, when we see it, from iron-glance, and diamonds from flint-sand, being for most of us a more profitable employment than trying to make diamonds out of our own

charcoal. And for this God-made supremacy, I generally have used, and shall continue to use, the word Inspiration, not carelessly nor lightly, but in all logical calmness and perfect reverence.

There is reciprocal action between the intensity of moral feeling and the power of imagination; for, on the one hand, those who have keenest sympathy are those who look closest, and pierce deepest, and hold securest; and, on the other, those who have so pierced and seen the melancholy deeps of things, are filled with the most intense passion and gentleness of sympathy. Hence, I suppose that the powers of the imagination may always be tested by accompanying tenderness of emotion, and thus, (as Byron said,) there is no tenderness like Dante's, neither any intensity nor seriousness like his, such seriousness that it is incapable of perceiving that which is commonplace or ridiculous, but fuses all down into its white-hot fire. All egotism, and selfish care, or regard, are in proportion to their constancy, destructive of imagination; whose play and power depend altogether on our being able to forget ourselves and enter like possessing spirits into the bodies of things about us.

Again, as the life of imagination is in the discovering of truth, it is clear it can have no respect for sayings or opinions: knowing in itself when it has invented truly—restless and tormented except when it has this knowledge, its sense of success or failure is too acute to be affected by praise or blame. Sympathy it desires—but can do without; of opinions it is regardless, not in pride, but because it has no vanity, and is conscious of a rule of action and object of aim in which it cannot be mistaken; partly, also, in pure energy of desire and longing to do and to invent more and more, which suffer it not to suck the sweetness of praise—unless a little, with the end of the rod in its hand, and without pausing in its march. It goes straight

forward up the hill; no voices nor mutterings can turn it back, nor petrify it from its purpose.

The imagination must be fed constantly by external nature —after the illustrations we have given, this may seem mere truism, for it is clear that to the exercise of the penetrative faculty a subject of penetration is necessary; but I note it because many painters of powerful mind have been lost to the world by their suffering the restless writhing of their imagination in its cage to take place of its healthy and exulting activity in the fields of nature. The most imaginative men always study the hardest, and are the most thirsty for new knowledge. Fancy plays like a squirrel in its circular prison, and is happy; but imagination is a pilgrim on the earth—and her home is in heaven. Shut her from the fields of the celestial mountains—bar her from breathing their lofty, sun-warmed air; and we may as well turn upon her the last bolt of the tower of famine, and give the keys to the keeping of the wildest surge that washes Capraja and Gorgona.

Witness the operation of the imagination in Coleridge, on one of the most trifling objects that could possibly have been submitted to its action.

"The thin blue flame
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not:
Only that film which fluttered on the grate
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks its motion in this hush of nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me, who live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling spirit
By its own moods interprets; everywhere,
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of thought."

Observe the sweet operation of fancy, in the following well-

known passage from Scott, where both her beholding and transforming powers are seen in their simplicity.

"The rocky summits—split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battlement.—
Or seemed fantastically set
With cupola or minaret.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lacked they many a banner fair,
For from their shivered brows displayed,
Far o'er th' unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dew-drop sheen,
The brier-rose fell, in streamers green,—
And creeping shrubs of thousand dyes
Waved in the west wind's summer sighs."

Compare with it the real and high action of the imagination on the same matter in Wordsworth's Yew trees (which I consider the most vigorous and solemn bit of forest landscape ever painted):—

"Each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwisted fibres serpentine,
Up coiling and inveterately convolved,
*Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks*
*That threaten the profane.*"

## THE SUPERNATURAL.

There are four ways in which beings supernatural may be conceived as manifesting themselves to human sense. The first, by external types, signs, or influences; as God to Moses in the flames of the bush, and to Elijah in the voice of Horeb.

The second, by the assuming of a form not properly belonging to them; as the Holy Spirit of that of a Dove, the second person of the Trinity of that of a Lamb; and so such manifestations, under angelic or other form, of the first person of the Trinity, as seem to have been made to Abraham, Moses, and Ezekiel.

The third, by the manifestation of a form properly belonging to them, but not necessarily seen; as of the Risen Christ to his disciples when the doors were shut. And the fourth, by their operation on the human form, which they influence or inspire, as in the shining of the face of Moses.

It is evident that in all these cases, wherever there is form at all, it is the form of some creature to us known. It is no new form peculiar to spirit, nor can it be. We can conceive of none. Our inquiry is simply, therefore, by what modifications those creature forms to us known, as of a lamb, a bird, or a human creature, may be explained as signs or habitations of Divinity, or of angelic essence, and not creatures such as they seem.

This may be done in two ways. First, by effecting some change in the appearance of the creature inconsistent with its actual nature, as by giving it colossal size, or unnatural color, or material, as of gold, or silver, or flame, instead of flesh, or by taking away its property of matter altogether, and forming it of light or shade, or in an intermediate step, of cloud, or vapor; or explaining it by terrible concomitant circumstances, as of wounds in the body, or strange lights and seemings round about it; or by joining of two bodies together as in angels' wings. Of all which means of attaining supernatural character (which, though in their nature ordinary and vulgar, are yet effective and very glorious in mighty hands) we have already seen the limits in speaking of the imagination.

But the second means of obtaining supernatural character is that with which we are now concerned, namely, retaining the actual form in its full and material presence, and without aid from any external interpretation whatever, to raise that form by mere inherent dignity to such a pitch of power and impressiveness as cannot but assert and stamp it for superhuman.

He who can do this has reached the last pinnacle and utmost power of ideal, or any other art. He stands in no need, thenceforward, of cloud, nor lightning, nor tempest, nor terror of mystery. His sublime is independent of the elements. It is of that which shall stand when they shall melt with fervent heat, and light the firmament when the sun is as sackcloth of hair.

The Greek could not conceive a spirit; he could do nothing without limbs; his god is a finite god, talking, pursuing, and going journeys; if at any time he was touched with a true feeling of the unseen powers around him, it was in the field of poised battle, for there is something in the near coming of the shadow of death, something in the devoted fulfilment of mortal duty, that reveals the real God, though darkly; that pause on the field of Platæa was not one of vain superstition; the two white figures that blazed along the Delphic plain, when the earthquake and the fire led the charge from Olympus, were more than sunbeams on the battle dust; the sacred cloud, with its lance light and triumph singing, that went down to brood over the masts of Salamis, was more than morning mist among the olives: and yet what were the Greek's thoughts of his god of battle? No spirit power was in the vision; it was a being of clay strength and human passion, foul, fierce, and changeful; of penetrable arms, and vulnerable flesh. Gather what we may of great, from pagan

chisel or pagan dream, and set it beside the orderer of Christian warfare, Michael the Archangel: not Milton's "with hostile brow and visage all inflamed," not even Milton's in kingly treading of the hills of Paradise, not Raffaelle's with the expanded wings and brandished spear, but Perugino's with his triple crest of traceless plume unshaken in heaven, his hand fallen on his crossleted sword, the truth girdle binding his undinted armor; God has put his power upon him, resistless radiance is on his limbs, no lines are there of earthly strength, no trace on the divine features of earthly anger; trustful and thoughtful, fearless, but full of love, incapable except of the repose of eternal conquest, vessel and instrument of Omnipotence, filled like a cloud with the victor light, the dust of principalities and powers beneath his feet, the murmur of hell against him heard by his spiritual ear like the winding of a shell on the far off sea-shore.

It is vain to attempt to pursue the comparison; the two orders of art have in them nothing common, and the field of sacred history, the intent and scope of Christian feeling, are too wide and exalted to admit of the juxtaposition of any other sphere or order of conception; they embrace all other fields like the dome of heaven. With what comparison shall we compare the types of the martyr saints, the St. Stephen of Fra Bartolomeo, with his calm forehead crowned by the stony diadem, or the St. Catherine of Raffaelle looking up to heaven in the dawn of the eternal day, with her lips parted in the resting from her pain? or with what the Madonnas of Francia and Pinturicchio, in whom the hues of the morning and the solemnity of eve, the gladness in accomplished promise, and sorrow of the sword-pierced heart, are gathered into one human lamp of ineffable love? or with what the angel choirs of Angelico, with the flames on their white foreheads waving brighter as they move, and the sparkles strear

ing from their purple wings like the glitter of many suns upon a sounding sea, listening, in the pauses of alternate song, for the prolonging of the trumpet blast, and the answering of psaltery and cymbal, throughout the endless deep and from all the star shores of heaven?

Bacon and Pascal appear to be men naturally very similar in their temper and powers of mind. One, born in York House, Strand, of courtly parents, educated in court atmosphere, and replying, almost as soon as he could speak, to the queen asking how old he was—"Two years younger than Your Majesty's happy reign!"—has the world's meanness and cunning engrafted into his intellect, and remains smooth, serene, unenthusiastic, and in some degree base, even with all his sincere devotion and universal wisdom; bearing, to the end of life, the likeness of a marble palace in the street of a great city, fairly furnished within, and bright in wall and battlement, yet noisome in places about the foundations. The other, born at Clermont, in Auvergne, under the shadow of the Puy de Dôme, though taken to Paris at eight years old, retains for ever the impress of his birthplace; pursuing natural philosophy with the same zeal as Bacon, he returns to his own mountains to put himself under their tutelage, and by their help first discovers the great relations of the earth and the air: struck at last with mortal disease; gloomy, enthusiastic, and superstitious, with a conscience burning like lava, and inflexible like iron, the clouds gather about the majesty of him, fold after fold; and, with his spirit buried in ashes, and rent by earthquake, yet fruitful of true thought and faithful affection, he stands like that mound of desolate scoria that crowns the hill ranges of his native land, with its sable summit far in heaven, and its foundations green with the ordered garden and the trellised vine.

When, however, our inquiry thus branches into the successive analysis of individual characters, it is time for us to leave it; noting only one or two points respecting Shakespere. He seems to have been sent essentially to take universal and equal grasp of the *human* nature; and to have been removed, therefore, from all influences which could in the least warp or bias his thoughts. It was necessary that he should lean *no* way; that he should contemplate, with absolute equality of judgment, the life of the court, cloister, and tavern, and be able to sympathize so completely with all creatures as to deprive himself, together with his personal identity, even of his conscience, as he casts himself into their hearts. He must be able to enter into the soul of Falstaff or Shylock with no more sense of contempt or horror than Falstaff or Shylock themselves feel for or in themselves; otherwise his own conscience and indignation would make him unjust to them; he would turn aside from something, miss some good, or overlook some essential palliation. He must be utterly without anger, utterly without purpose; for if a man has any serious purpose in life, that which runs counter to it, or is foreign to it, will be looked at frowningly or carelessly by him. Shakespere was forbidden of Heaven to have any *plans*. To *do* any good or *get* any good, in the common sense of good, was not to be within his permitted range of work. Not, for him, the founding of institutions, the preaching of doctrines, or the repression of abuses. Neither he, nor the sun, did, on any morning that they rose together, receive charge from their Maker concerning such things. They were both of them to shine on the evil and good; both to behold unoffendedly all that was upon the earth, to burn unappalled upon the spears of kings, and undisdaining, upon the reeds of the river.

Therefore, so far as nature had influence over the early

training of this man, it was essential to his perfectness that the nature should be quiet. No mountain passions were to be allowed in him. Inflict upon him but one pang of the monastic conscience; cast upon him but one cloud of the mountain gloom; and his serenity had been gone for ever—his equity—his infinity. You would have made another Dante of him; and all that he would have ever uttered about poor, soiled, and frail humanity would have been the quarrel between Sinon and Adam of Brescia,—speedily retired from, as not worthy a man's hearing, nay, not to be heard without heavy fault. All your Falstaffs, Slenders, Quicklys, Sir Tobys, Lances, Touchstones, and Quinces would have been lost in that. Shakespere could be allowed no mountains; nay, not even any supreme natural beauty. He had to be left with his kingcups and clover;—pansies—the passing clouds—the Avon's flow—and the undulating hills and woods of Warwick; nay, he was not to love even these in any exceeding measure, lest it might make him in the least overrate their power upon the strong, full-fledged minds of men. He makes the quarrelling fairies concerned about them; poor lost Ophelia find some comfort in them; fearful, fair, wise-hearted Perdita trust the speaking of her good will and good hostess-ship to them; and one of the brothers of Imogen confide his sorrow to them,—rebuked instantly by his brother for "wench-like words;*" but any

* "With fairest flowers
While summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I'll sweeten thy sad grave. Thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face—pale primrose, nor
The azured harebell—like thy veins; no, nor
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander,
Outsweetened not thy breath. The ruddock would
With charitable bill bring thee all this;
Yea, and furred moss besides, when flowers are none
To winter-ground thy corse.

thought of them in his mighty men I do not find: it is not usually in the nature of such men; and if he had loved the flowers the *least* better himself, he would assuredly have been offended at this, and given a botanical turn of mind to Cæsar, or Othello.

And it is even among the most curious proofs of the necessity to all high imagination that it should paint straight from the life, that he has *not* given such a turn of mind to some of his great men;—Henry the Fifth, for instance. Doubtless some of my readers, having been accustomed to hear it repeated thoughtlessly from mouth to mouth that Shakespere conceived the spirit of all ages, were as much offended as surprised at my saying that he only painted human nature as he saw it in his own time. They will find, if they look into his work closely, as much antiquarianism as they do geography, and no more. The commonly received notions about the things that had been, Shakespere took as he found them, animating them with pure human nature, of any time and all time; but inquiries into the minor detail of temporary feeling, he despised as utterly as he did maps; and wheresoever the temporary feeling was in anywise contrary to that of his own day, he errs frankly, and paints from his own time. For instance in this matter of love of flowers; we have traced

*Gui.* Prithee, have done,
And do not play in wench-like words with that
Which is so serious."

Imogen herself, afterwards in deeper passion, will give weeds—not flowers—and something more:

"And when
With wildwood leaves, and weeds, I have strewed his **grave,**
And on it said a century of prayers,
Such as I can, twice o'er, I'll weep and sigh,
And, leaving so his service, follow you."

already, far enough for our general purposes, the mediæval interest in them, whether to be enjoyed in the fields, or to be used for types of ornamentation in dress. If Shakespere had cared to enter into the spirit even of the early fifteenth century, he would assuredly have marked this affection in some of his knights, and indicated, even then, in heroic tempers, the peculiar respect for loveliness of *dress* which we find constantly in Dante. But he could not do this; he had not seen it in real life. In his time dress had become an affectation and absurdity. Only fools, or wise men in their weak moments, showed much concern about it; and the facts of human nature which appeared to him general in the matter were the soldier's disdain, and the coxcomb's care of it. Hence Shakespere's good soldier is almost always in plain or battered armor; even the speech of Vernon in Henry the Fourth, which, as far as I remember, is the only one that bears fully upon the beauty of armor, leans more upon the spirit and hearts of men—"bated, like eagles having lately bathed;" and has an under-current of slight contempt running through the following line, "Glittering in golden coats, *like images;*" while the beauty of the young Harry is essentially the beauty of fiery and perfect youth, answering as much to the Greek, or Roman, or Elizabethan knight as to the mediæval one; whereas the definite interest in armor and dress is opposed by Shakespere in the French (meaning to depreciate them), to the English rude soldierliness:

"*Con.* Tut, I have the best armor of the world. Would it were day!
*Orl.* You have an excellent armor, but let my horse have his due."

And again:

"My lord constable, the armor that I saw in your tent to-night, are those stars, or suns, upon it?"

while Henry, half proud of his poorness of array, speaks of armorial splendor scornfully; the main idea being still of its being a gilded show and vanity—

"Our gayness and our *gilt* are all besmirched."

This is essentially Elizabethan. The quarterings on a knight's shield, or the inlaying of his armor, would never have been thought of by him as mere "gayness or gilt" in earlier days.* In like manner, throughout every scale of rank or feeling, from that of the French knights down to Falstaff's "I looked he should have sent me two-and-twenty yards of satin, as I am true knight, and he sends me security!" care for dress is always considered by Shakespere as contemptible; and Mrs. Quickly distinguishes herself from a true fairy by her solicitude to scour the *chairs of order*—and "each fair instalment, coat, and several crest;" and the association in her mind of the flowers in the fairy rings with the

"Sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery,
Buckled below fair knighthood's bending knee;"

while the true fairies, in field simplicity, are only anxious to "sweep the dust behind the door;" and

"With this field dew consecrate,
Every several chamber bless
Through this palace with sweet peace."

Note the expression "Field dew consecrate." Shakspere

* If the reader thinks that in Henry the Fifth's time the Elizabethan temper might already have been manifesting itself, let him compare the English herald's speech, act 2, scene 2, of King John; and by way of specimen of Shakspere's historical care, or regard of mediæval character, the large use of *artillery* in the previous scene.

loved courts and camps; but he felt that sacredness and peace were in the dew of the Fields only.

There is another respect in which he was wholly incapable of entering into the spirit of the middle ages. He had no great art of any kind around him in his own country, and was, consequently, just as powerless to conceive the general influence of former art, as a man of the most inferior calibre. Therefore it was, that I did not care to quote his authority when speaking on a former occasion respecting the power of imitation. If it had been needful to add his testimony to that of Dante), I might have quoted multitudes of passages wholly concurring with that, of which the "fair Portia's counterfeit," with the following lines, and the implied ideal of sculpture in the Winter's Tale, are wholly unanswerable instances. But Shakespere's evidence in matters of art is as narrow as the range of Elizabethan art in England, and resolves itself wholly into admiration of two things,—mockery of life (as in this instance of Hermione as a statue), or absolute splendor, as in the close of Romeo and Juliet, where the notion of *gold* as the chief source of dignity of aspect, coming down to Shakespere from the times of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and, as I said before, strictly Elizabethan, would interfere seriously with the pathos of the whole passage, but for the sense of sacrifice implied in it:

> "As *rich* shall Romeo by his lady lie,
> Poor sacrifices of our enmity."

And observe, I am not giving these examples as proof of any smallness in Shakespere, but of his greatness; that is to say, of his contentment, like every other great man who ever breathed, to paint nothing but *what he saw;* and therefore giving perpetual evidence that his sight was of the sixteenth,

and not of the thirteenth century, beneath all the broad and eternal humanity of his imagination. How far in these modern days, emptied of splendor, it may be necessary for great men having certain sympathies for those earlier ages, to act in this differently from all their predecessors; and how far they may succeed in the resuscitation of the past by habitually dwelling in all their thoughts among vanished generations, are questions, of all practical and present ones concerning art, the most difficult to decide; for already in poetry several of our truest men have set themselves to this task, and have indeed put more vitality into the shadows of the dead than most others can give the presences of the living. Thus Longfellow, in the Golden Legend, has entered more closely into the temper of the Monk, for good and for evil, than ever yet theological writer or historian, though they may have given their life's labor to the analysis: and, again, Robert Browning is unerring in every sentence he writes of the middle ages.

At the close of the last century, the architecture, domestic life and manners were gradually getting more and more artificial; all natural beauty had ceased to be permitted in architectural decoration, while the habits of society led them more and more to live, if possible, in cities; and the dress, language, and manners of men, in general, were approximating to that horrible and lifeless condition in which you find them, just before the outbreak of the French Revolution.

Now, observe: exactly as hoops, and starch, and false hair, and all that in mind and heart these things typify and betray, as these, I say, gained upon men, there was a necessary reaction in favor of the *natural*. Men had never lived so utterly in defiance of the laws of nature before; but they could not do this without feeling a strange charm in that which they defied;

and accordingly we find this reactionary sentiment expressing itself in a base school of what was called *pastoral* poetry; that is to say, poetry written in praise of the country, by men who lived in coffee-houses and on the Mall. The essence of pastoral poetry is the sense of strange delightfulness in grass, which is occasionally felt by a man who has seldom set his foot on it; it is essentially the poetry of the cockney, and for the most part corresponds in its aim and rank, as compared with other literature, to the porcelain shepherds and shepherdesses on a chimney-piece as compared with great works of sculpture.

Of course all good poetry, descriptive of rural life, is essentially pastoral, or has the effect of the pastoral, on the minds of men living in cities; but the class of poetry which I mean, and which you probably understand, by the term pastoral, is that in which a farmer's girl is spoken of as a "nymph," and a farmer's boy as a "swain," and in which, throughout, a ridiculous and unnatural refinement is supposed to exist in rural life, merely because the poet himself has neither had the courage to endure its hardships, nor the wit to conceive its realities. If you examine the literature of the past century, you will find that nearly all its expressions, having reference to the country, show something of this kind; either a foolish sentimentality, or a morbid fear, both of course coupled with the most curious ignorance. You will find all its descriptive expressions at once vague and monotonous. Brooks are always "purling;" birds always "warbling;" mountains always "lift their horrid peaks above the clouds;" vales always "are lost in the shadow of gloomy woods;" a few more distinct ideas about haymaking and curds and cream, acquired in the neighbourhood of Richmond Bridge, serving to give an occasional appearance of freshness to the catalogue of the sublime and beautiful which descended from poet to poet; while

a few true pieces of pastoral, like the "Vicar of Wakefield," and Walton's "Angler," relieved the general waste of dulness. Even in these better productions, nothing is more remarkable than the general conception of the country merely as a series of green fields, and the combined ignorance and dread of more sublime scenery; of which the mysteries and dangers were enhanced by the difficulties of travelling at the period. Thus in Walton's "Angler," you have a meeting of two friends, one a Derbyshireman, the other a lowland traveller, who is as much alarmed, and uses nearly as many expressions of astonishment, at having to go down a steep hill and ford a brook, as a traveller uses now at crossing the glacier of the Col de Geant. I am not sure whether the difficulties which, until late years, have lain in the way of peaceful and convenient travelling, ought not to have great weight assigned to them among the other causes of the temper of the century; but be that as it may, if you will examine the whole range of its literature—keeping this point in view—I am well persuaded that you will be struck most forcibly by the strange deadness to the higher sources of landscape sublimity which is mingled with the morbid pastoralism. The love of fresh air and green grass forced itself upon the animal natures of men; but that of the sublimer features of scenery had no place in minds whose chief powers had been repressed by the formalisms of the age. And although in the second-rate writers continually, and in the first-rate ones occasionally, you find an affectation of interest in mountains, clouds, and forests, yet whenever they write from their heart, you will find an utter absence of feeling respecting anything beyond gardens and grass. Examine, for instance, the novels of Smollett, Fielding, and Sterne, the comedies of Molière, and the writings of Johnson and Addison, and I do not think you will find a single expression of true delight in sublime nature in any one of them. Per-

haps Sterne's "Sentimental Journey," in its total absence of sentiment on any subject but humanity, and its entire want of notice of anything at Geneva, which might not as well have been seen at Coxwold, is the most striking instance I could give you; and if you compare with this negation of feeling on one side, the interludes of Molière, in which shepherds and shepherdesses are introduced in court dress, you have a very accurate conception of the general spirit of the age.

It was in such a state of society that the landscape of Claude, Gaspar Poussin, and Salvator Rosa attained its reputation. It is the complete expression on canvas of the spirit of the time. Claude embodies the foolish pastoralism, Salvator the ignorant terror, and Gaspar the dull and affected erudition.

It was, however, altogether impossible that this state of things could long continue. The age which had buried itself in formalism grew weary at last of the restraint; and the approach of a new æra was marked by the appearance, and the enthusiastic reception, of writers who took delight in those wild scenes of nature which had so long been despised.

I think the first two writers in whom the symptoms of a change are strongly manifested are Mrs. Radcliffe and Rousseau; in both of whom the love of natural scenery, though mingled in the one case with what was merely dramatic, and in the other with much that was pitifully morbid or vicious, was still itself genuine, and intense, differing altogether in character from any sentiments previously traceable in literature. And then rapidly followed a group of writers, who expressed, in various ways, the more powerful or more pure feeling which had now become one of the strongest instincts of the age. Of these, the principal is Walter Scott. Many writers, indeed, describe nature more minutely and more profoundly; but none show in higher intensity the peculiar

passion for what is majestic or lovely in *wild* nature, to which I am now referring. The whole of the poem of the "Lady of the Lake" is written with almost a boyish enthusiasm for rocks, and lakes, and cataracts; the early novels show the same instinct in equal strength wherever he approaches Highland scenery; and the feeling is mingled, observe, with a most touching and affectionate appreciation of the Gothic architecture, in which alone he found the elements of natural beauty seized by art; so that, to this day, his descriptions of Melrose and Holy Island Cathedral, in the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" and "Marmion," as well as of the ideal abbeys in the "Monastery" and "Antiquary," together with those of Caerlaverock and Lochleven Castles in "Guy Mannering" and "The Abbot," remain the staple possessions and text-books of all travellers, not so much for their beauty or accuracy, as for their *exactly expressing that degree of feeling with which most men in this century can sympathise.*

Together with Scott appeared the group of poets,—Byron, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, and, finally, Tennyson,—differing widely in moral principles and spiritual temper, but all agreeing more or less in this love for natural scenery.

Now, you will ask me—and you will ask me most reasonably—how this love of nature in modern days can be connected with Christianity, seeing it is as strong in the infidel Shelley as in the sacred Wordsworth. Yes, and it was found in far worse men than Shelley. Shelley was an honest unbeliever, and a man of warm affections; but this new love of nature is found in the most reckless and unprincipled of the French novelists,—in Eugene Sue, in Dumas, in George Sand,—and that intensely. How is this? Simply because the feeling is reactionary; and, in this phase of it, common to the diseased mind as well as to the healthy one. A man dying in the fever of intemperance will cry out for water, and that with a bitterer

thirst than a man whose healthy frame naturally delights in the mountain spring more than in the wine cup. The water is not dishonored by the thirst of that diseased, nor is nature dishonored by the love of the unworthy. That love is, perhaps, the only saving element in their minds; and it still remains an indisputable truth that the love of nature is a characteristic of the Christian heart, just as the hunger for healthy food is characteristic of the healthy frame.

I think it probable that many readers may be surprised at my calling Scott the great representative of the mind of the age in literature. Those who can perceive the intense penetrative depth of Wordsworth, and the exquisite finish and melodious power of Tennyson, may be offended at my placing in higher rank that poetry of careless glance, and reckless rhyme, in which Scott poured out the fancies of his youth; and those who are familiar with the subtle analysis of the French novelists, or who have in any wise submitted themselves to the influence of German philosophy, may be equally indignant at my ascribing a principality to Scott among the literary men of Europe, in an age which has produced De Balzac and Goethe.

I believe the first test of a truly great man is his humility I do not mean, by humility, doubt of his own power, or hesitation in speaking of his opinions; but a right understanding of the relation between what *he* can do and say, and the rest of the world's sayings and doings. All great men not only know their business, but usually know that they know it; and are not only right in their main opinions, but they usually know that they are right in them; only they do not think much of themselves on that account. Arnolfo knows he can build a good dome at Florence; Albert Durer writes calmly to one who had found fault with his work, "It cannot be better done;" Sir Isaac Newton knows that he has worked out a problem or

two that would have puzzled anybody else;—only they do not expect their fellow-men therefore to fall down and worship them; they have a curious under-sense of powerlessness, feeling that the greatness is not *in* them, but *through* them; that they could not do or be anything else than God made them. And they see something divine and God-made in every other man they meet, and are endlessly, foolishly, and incredibly merciful.

Now, I find among the men of the present age, as far as I know them, this character in Scott and Turner pre-eminently; I am not sure if it is not in them alone. I do not find Scott talking about the dignity of literature, nor Turner about the dignity of painting. They do their work, feeling that they cannot well help it; the story must be told, and the effect put down; and if people like it, well and good; and if not, the world will not be much the worse.

I believe a very different impression of their estimate of themselves and their doings will be received by any one who reads the conversations of Wordsworth or Goethe. The *slightest* manifestation of jealousy or self-complacency is enough to mark a second-rate character of the intellect; and I fear that, especially in Goethe, such manifestations are neither few nor slight.

Connected with this general humility is the total absence of affectation in these men,—that is to say, of any assumption of manner or behavior in their work, in order to attract attention. Not but that they are mannerists both. Scott's verse is strongly mannered, and Turner's oil painting; but the manner of it is necessitated by the feelings of the men, entirely natural to both, never exaggerated for the sake of show. I hardly know any other literary or pictorial work of the day which is not in some degree affected. I am afraid Wordsworth was often affected in his simplicity, and De Balzac

in his finish. Many fine French writers are affected in their reserve, and full of stage tricks in placing of sentences. It is lucky if in German writers we ever find so much as a sentence without affectation.

Again: another very important, though not infallible test of greatness is, as we have often said, the appearance of Ease with which the thing is done. It may be that, as with Dante and Leonardo, the finish given to the work effaces the evidence of ease; but where the ease is manifest, as in Scott, Turner, and Tintoret; and the thing done is very noble, it is a strong reason for placing the men above those who confessedly work with great pains. Scott writing his chapter or two before breakfast —not retouching, Turner finishing a whole drawing in a forenoon before he goes to shoot (providing always the chapter and drawing be good), are instantly to be set above men who confessedly have spent the day over the work, and think the hours well spent if it has been a little mended between sunrise and sunset. Indeed, it is no use for men to think to appear great by working fast, dashing, and scrawling; the thing they do must be good and great, cost what time it may; but if it *be* so, and they have honestly and unaffectedly done it with *no effort*, it is probably a greater and better thing than the result of the hardest efforts of others.

Then, as touching the kind of work done by these two men, the more I think of it I find this conclusion more impressed upon me,—that the greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to *see* something, and tell what it *saw* in a plain way. Hundreds of people can talk for one who can think, but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly, is poetry, prophecy, and religion,—all in one.

Therefore, finding the world of Literature more or less divided into Thinkers and Seers, I believe we shall find also that the Seers are wholly the greater race of the two. A true Thinker,

who has practical purpose in his thinking, and is sincere, as Plato, or Carlyle, or Helps, becomes in some sort a seer, and must be always of infinite use in his generation; but an affected Thinker, who supposes his thinking of any other importance than as it tends to work, is about the vainest kind of person that can be found in the occupied classes. Nay, I believe that metaphysicians and philosophers are, on the whole, the greatest troubles the world has got to deal with; and that while a tyrant or bad man is of some use in teaching people submission or indignation, and a thoroughly idle man is only harmful in setting an idle example, and communicating to other lazy people his own lazy misunderstandings, busy metaphysicians are always entangling *good* and *active* people, and weaving cobwebs among the finest wheels of the world's business; and are as much as possible, by all prudent persons, to be brushed out of their way, like spiders, and the meshed weed that has got into the Cambridgeshire canals, and other such impediments to barges and business. And if we thus clear the metaphysical element out of modern literature, we shall find its bulk amazingly diminished, and the claims of the remaining writers, or of those whom we have thinned by this abstraction of their straw stuffing, much more easily adjusted.*

Again: the mass of sentimental literature, concerned with the analysis and description of emotion, headed by the poetry of Byron, is altogether of lower rank than the literature which merely describes what it saw. The true Seer always feels as intensely as any one else; but he does not much describe his

* Observe, I do not speak thus of metaphysics because I have no pleasure in them. When I speak contemptuously of philology, it may be answered me, that I am a bad scholar; but I cannot be so answered touching metaphysics, for every one conversant with such subjects may see that I have strong inclination that way, which would, indeed, have led me far astray long ago, if I had not learned also some use of my hands, eyes, and feet.

feelings. He tells you whom he met, and what they said leaves you to make out, from that, what they feel, and what he feels, but goes into little detail. And, generally speaking pathetic writing and careful explanation of passion are quite easy, compared with this plain recording of what people said or did, or with the right invention of what they are likely to say and do; for this reason, that to invent a story, or admirably and thoroughly tell any part of a story, it is necessary to grasp the entire mind of every personage concerned in it, and know precisely how they would be affected by what happens; which to do requires a colossal intellect; but to describe a separate emotion delicately, it is only needed that one should feel it oneself; and thousands of people are capable of feeling this or that noble emotion, for one who is able to enter into all the feelings of somebody sitting on the other side of the table. Even, therefore, when this sentimental literature is first rate, as in passages of Byron, Tennyson, and Keats, it ought not to be ranked so high as the Creative; and though perfection, even in narrow fields, is perhaps as rare as in the wider, and it may be as long before we have another In Memoriam as another Guy Mannering, I unhesitatingly receive as a greater manifestation of power the right invention of a few sentences spoken by Pleydell and Mannering across their supper-table, than the most tender and passionate melodies of the self-examining verse.

Having, therefore, cast metaphysical writers out of our way, and sentimental writers into the second rank, I do not think Scott's supremacy among those who remain will any more be doubtful; nor would it, perhaps, have been doubtful before, had it not been encumbered by innumerable faults and weaknesses. But it is pre-eminently in these faults and weaknesses that Scott is representative of the mind of his age: and because he is the greatest man born amongst us, and intended for the enduring type of us, all our principal faults must be laid on his

shoulders, and he must bear down the dark marks to the latest ages; while the smaller men, who have some special work to do, perhaps not so much belonging to this age as leading out of it to the next, are often kept providentially quit of the encumbrances which they had not strength to sustain, and are much smoother and pleasanter to look at, in their way; only that is a smaller way.

Thus, the most startling fault of the age being its faithlessness, it is necessary that its greatest man should be faithless. Nothing is more notable or sorrowful in Scott's mind than its incapacity of steady belief in anything. He cannot even resolve hardily to believe in a ghost, or a water-spirit; always explains them away in an apologetic manner, not believing, all the while, even his own explanation. He never can clearly ascertain whether there is anything behind the arras but rats; never draws swords, and thrusts at it for life or death; but goes on looking at it timidly, and saying, "it must be the wind." He is educated a Presbyterian, and remains one, because it is the most sensible thing he can do if he is to live in Edinburgh; but he thinks Romanism more picturesque, and profaneness more gentlemanly: does not see that anything affects human life but love, courage, and destiny; which are, indeed, not matters of faith at all, but of sight. Any gods but those are very misty in outline to him; and when the love is laid ghastly in poor Charlotte's coffin; and the courage is no more of use,—the pen having fallen from between the fingers; and destiny is sealing the scroll,—the God-light is dim in the tears that fall on it.

He is in all this the epitome of his epoch.

Again: as another notable weakness of the age is its habit of looking back, in a romantic and passionate idleness, to the past ages, not understanding them all the while, nor really desiring to understand them, so Scott gives up nearly the half of his intellectual power to a fond, yet purposeless, dreaming

over the past, and spends half his literary labors in endeavors to revive it, not in reality, but on the stage of fiction; endeavors which were the best of the kind that modernism made, but still successful only so far as Scott put, under the old armor, the everlasting human nature which he knew; and totally unsuccessful, so far as concerned the painting of the armor itself, which he knew *not*. The excellence of Scott's work is precisely in proportion to the degree in which it is sketched from present nature. His familiar life is inimitable; his quiet scenes of introductory conversation, as the beginning of Rob Roy and Redgauntlet, and all his living Scotch characters, mean or noble, from Andrew Fairservice to Jeanie Deans, are simply right, and can never be bettered. But his romance and antiquarianism, his knighthood and monkery, are all false, and he knows them to be false; does not care to make them earnest; enjoys them for their strangeness, but laughs at his own antiquarianism, all through his own third novel,—with exquisite modesty indeed, but with total misunderstanding of the function of an Antiquary, He does not see how anything is to be got out of the past but confusion, old iron on drawing-room chairs, and serious inconvenience to Dr. Heavysterne.

Again: more than any age that had preceded it, ours had been ignorant of the meaning of the word "Art." It had not a single fixed principle, and what unfixed principles it worked upon were all wrong. It was necessary that Scott should know nothing of art. He neither cared for painting nor sculpture, and was totally incapable of forming a judgment about them. He had some confused love of Gothic architecture, because it was dark, picturesque, old, and like nature; but could not tell the worst from the best, and built for himself perhaps the most incongruous and ugly pile that gentlemanly modernism ever designed; marking, in the most curious and subtle way, that mingling of reverence with irreverence which

is so striking in the age; he reverences Melrose, yet casts one of its piscinas, puts a modern steel grate into it, and makes it his fireplace. Like all pure moderns, he supposes the Gothic barbarous, notwithstanding his love of it; admires, in an equally ignorant way, totally opposite styles; is delighted with the new town of Edinburgh; mistakes its dulness for purity of taste, and actually compares it, in its deathful formality of street, as contrasted with the rudeness of the old town, to Britomart taking off her armor.

Again: as in reverence and irreverence, so in levity and melancholy, we saw that the spirit of the age was strangely interwoven. Therefore, also, it is necessary that Scott should be light, careless, unearnest, and yet eminently sorrowful. Throughout all his work there is no evidence of any purpose but to while away the hour. His life had no other object than the pleasure of the instant, and the establishing of a family name. All thoughts were, in their outcome and end, less than nothing, and vanity. And yet, of all poetry that I know, none is so sorrowful as Scott's. Other great masters are pathetic in a resolute and predetermined way, when they choose; but, in their own minds, are evidently stern, or hopeful, or serene; never really melancholy. Even Byron is rather sulky and desperate than melancholy; Keats is sad because he is sickly; Shelley because he is impious; but Scott is inherently and consistently sad. Around all his power, and brightness, and enjoyment of eye and heart, the far-away Æolian knell is for ever sounding; there is not one of those loving or laughing glances of his but it is brighter for the film of tears; his mind is like one of his own hill rivers,—it is white, and flashes in the sun fairly, careless, as it seems, and hasty in its going, but

"Far beneath, where slow they creep
From pool to eddy, dark and deep,
Where alders moist, and willows weep,
You hear her streams repine."

Life begins to pass from him very early; and while Homer sings cheerfully in his blindness, and Dante retains his courage, and rejoices in hope of Paradise, through all his exile, Scott, yet hardly past his youth, lies pensive in the sweet sunshine and among the harvest of his native hills.

"Blackford, on whose uncultured breast,
Among the broom, and thorn, and whin,
A truant boy, I sought the nest,
Or listed as I lay at rest,
While rose on breezes thin
The murmur of the city crowd,
And, from his steeple jangling loud,
St. Giles's mingling din!
Now, from the summit to the plain,
Waves all the hill with yellow grain;
And on the landscape as I look,
Nought do I see unchanged remain,
Save the rude cliffs and chiming brook;
To me they make a heavy moan
Of early friendships past and gone."

Such, then, being the weaknesses which it was necessary that Scott should share with his age, in order that he might sufficiently represent it, and such the grounds for supposing him, in spite of all these weaknesses, the greatest literary man whom that age produced, let us glance at the principal points in which his view of landscape differs from that of the mediævals.

I shall not endeavor now, as I did with Homer and Dante, to give a complete analysis of all the feelings which appear to

be traceable in Scott's allusions to landscape scenery,—for this would require a volume,—but only to indicate the main points of differing character between his temper and Dante's. Then we will examine in detail, not the landscape of literature, but that of painting, which must, of course, be equally, or even in a higher degree, characteristic of the age.

And, first, observe Scott's habit of looking at nature neither as dead, or merely material, in the way that Homer regards it, nor as altered by his own feelings, in the way that Keats and Tennyson regard it, but as having an animation and pathos of *its own*, wholly irrespective of human presence or passion, —an animation which Scott loves and sympathizes with, as he would with a fellow-creature, forgetting himself altogether, and subduing his own humanity before what seems to him the power of the landscape.

"Yon lonely thorn,—would he could tell
The changes of his parent dell,
Since he, so grey and stubborn now,
Waved in each breeze a sapling bough!
Would he could tell, how deep the shade
A thousand mingled branches made,
How broad the shadows of the oak,
How clung the rowan to the rock,
And through the foliage showed his head,
With narrow leaves and berries red!"

Scott does not dwell on the grey stubbornness of the thorn, because he himself is at that moment disposed to be dull, or stubborn; neither on the cheerful peeping forth of the rowan, because he himself is at that moment cheerful or curious: but he perceives them both with the kind of interest that he would take in an old man, or a climbing boy; forgetting himself, in sympathy with either age or youth.

"And from the grassy slope he sees
The Greta flow to meet the Tees,
Where issuing from her darksome bed,
She caught the morning's eastern red,
And through the softening vale below
Rolled her bright waves in rosy glow,
All blushing to her bridal bed,
Like some shy maid, in convent bred;
While linnet, lark, and blackbird gay
Sing forth her nuptial roundelay."

Is Scott, or are the persons of his story, gay at this moment? Far from it. Neither Scott nor Risingham are happy, but the Greta is: and Scott's sympathy is ready for the Greta, on the instant.

Observe, therefore, this is not *pathetic* fallacy; for there is no passion in *Scott* which alters nature. It is not the lover's passion, making him think the larkspurs are listening for his lady's foot; it is not the miser's passion, making him think that dead leaves are falling coins; but it is an inherent and continual habit of thought, which Scott shares with the moderns in general, being, in fact, nothing else than the instinctive sense which men must have of the Divine presence, not formed into distinct belief. In the Greek it created, as we saw, the faithfully believed gods of the elements: in Dante and the mediævals, it formed the faithfully believed angelic presence: in the modern, it creates no perfect form, does not apprehend distinctly any Divine being or operation; but only a dim, slightly credited animation in the natural object, accompanied with great interest and affection for it. This feeling is quite universal with us, only varying in depth according to the greatness of the heart that holds it; and in Scott, being more than usually intense, and accompanied with infinite affection and quickness of sympathy, it enables him to conquer all tendencies to the pathetic fallacy, and, instead of making Nature

anywise subordinate to himself, he makes himself subordinate to *her*—follows her lead simply—does not venture to bring his own cares and thoughts into her pure and quiet presence—paints her in her simple and universal truth, adding no result of momentary passion or fancy, and appears, therefore, at first shallower than other poets, being in reality wider and healthier. "What am I?" he says continually, "that I should trouble this sincere nature with my thoughts. I happen to be feverish and depressed, and I could see a great many sad and strange things in those waves and flowers; but I have no business to see such things. Gay Greta! sweet harebells! *you* are not sad nor strange to most people; you are but bright water and blue blossoms; you shall not be anything else to me, except that I cannot help thinking you are a little alive,—no one can help thinking that." And thus, as Nature is bright, serene, or gloomy, Scott takes her temper, and paints her as she is; nothing of himself being ever intruded, except that far-away Eolian tone, of which he is unconscious; and sometimes a stray syllable or two, like that about Blackford Hill, distinctly stating personal feeling, but all the more modestly for that distinctness, and for the clear consciousness that it is not the chiming brook, nor the corn-fields, that are sad, but only the boy that rests by them; so returning on the instant to reflect, in all honesty, the image of Nature as she is meant by all to be received; nor that in fine words, but in the first that come; nor with comment of far-fetched thoughts, but with easy thoughts, such as all sensible men ought to have in such places, only spoken sweetly; and evidently also with an undercurrent of more profound reflection, which here and there murmurs for a moment, and which I think, if we choose, we may continually pierce down to, and drink deeply from, but which Scott leaves us to seek, or shun, at our pleasure.

And in consequence of this unselfishness and humility, Scott's

enjoyment of Nature is incomparably greater than that of any other poet I know. All the rest carry their cares to her, and begin maundering in her ears about their own affairs. Tennyson goes out on a furzy common, and sees it is calm autumn sunshine, but it gives him no pleasure. He only remembers that it is

> "Dead calm in that noble breast
> Which heaves but with the heaving deep."

He sees a thundercloud in the evening, and *would* have "doted and pored" on it, but cannot, for fear it should bring the ship bad weather. Keats drinks the beauty of Nature violently; but has no more real sympathy with her than he has with a bottle of claret. His palate is fine; but he "bursts joy's grape against it," gets nothing but misery, and a bitter taste of dregs out of his desperate draught.

Byron and Shelley are nearly the same, only with less truth of perception, and even more troublesome selfishness. Wordsworth is more like Scott, and understands how to be happy, but yet cannot altogether rid himself of the sense that he is a philosopher, and ought always to be saying something wise. He has also a vague notion that Nature would not be able to get on well without Wordsworth; and finds a considerable part of his pleasure in looking at himself, as well as at her. But with Scott the love is entirely humble and unselfish. "I, Scott, am nothing, and less than nothing; but these crags, and heaths, and clouds, how great they are, how lovely, how for ever to be beloved, only for their own silent, thoughtless sake!"

This pure passion for nature in its abstract being, is still increased in its intensity by the two elements above taken notice of,—the love of antiquity, and the love of color and

beautiful form, mortified in our streets, and seeking for food in the wilderness and the ruin: both feelings, observe, instinctive in Scott from his childhood, as everything that makes a man great is always.

> "And well the lonely infant knew
> Recesses where the wallflower grew,
> And honeysuckle loved to crawl,
> Up the long crag and ruined wall.
> I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade
> The sun in all its round surveyed."

Not that these could have been instinctive in a child in the Middle Ages. The sentiments of a people increase or diminish in intensity from generation to generation,—every disposition of the parents affecting the frame of the mind in their offspring: the soldier's child is born to be yet more a soldier, and the politician's to be still more a politician; even the slightest colors of sentiment and affection are transmitted to the heirs of life; and the crowning expression of the mind of a people is given when some infant of highest capacity, and sealed with the impress of this national character, is born where providential circumstances permit the full development of the powers it has received straight from Heaven, and the passions which it has inherited from its fathers.

This love of ancientness, and that of natural beauty, associate themselves also in Scott with the love of liberty, which was indeed at the root even of all his Jacobite tendencies in politics. For, putting aside certain predilections about landed property, and family name, and "gentlemanliness" in the club sense of the word,—respecting which I do not now inquire whether they were weak or wise,—the main element which makes Scott like Cavaliers better than Puritans is, that he thinks the former *free* and *masterful* as well as loyal; and

the latter *formal* and *slavish*. He is loyal, not so much in respect for law, as in unselfish love for the king; and his sympathy is quite as ready for any active borderer who breaks the law, or fights the king, in what Scott thinks a generous way, as for the king himself. Rebellion of a rough, free, and bold kind he is always delighted by; he only objects to rebellion on principle and in form: bare-headed and open-throated treason he will abet to any extent, but shrinks from it in a peaked hat and starched collar: nay, politically, he only delights in kingship itself, because he looks upon it as the head and centre of liberty; and thinks that, keeping hold of a king's hand, one may get rid of the cramps and fences of law; and that the people may be governed by the whistle, as a Highland clan on the open hill-side, instead of being shut up into hurdled folds or hedged fields, as sheep or cattle left masterless.

And thus nature becomes dear to Scott in a threefold way: dear to him, first, as containing those remains or memories of the past, which he cannot find in cities, and giving hope of Prætorian mound or knight's grave, in every green slope and shade of its desolate places;—dear, secondly, in its moorland liberty, which has for him just as high a charm as the fenced garden had for the mediæval:

> "For I was wayward, bold, and wild,
> A self-willed imp—a grandame's child;
> But, half a plague, and half a jest,
> Was still endured, beloved, caressed:
> For me, thus nurtured, dost thou ask
> The classic poet's well-conned task?
> Nay, Erskine, nay. On the wild hill
> Let the wild heathbell flourish still;
> Cherish the tulip, prune the vine;
> But freely let the woodbine twine,
> And leave untrimmed the eglantine;"

—and dear to him, finally, in that perfect beauty, denied alike

in cities and in men, for which every modern heart had begun at last to thirst, and Scott's, in its freshness and power, of all men's, most earnestly.

And in this love of beauty, observe, that (as I said we might except) the love of *color* is a leading element, his healthy mind being incapable of losing, under any modern false teaching, its joy in brilliancy of hue. Though not so subtle a colorist as Dante, which, under the circumstances of the age, he could not be, he depends quite as much upon color for his power or pleasure. And, in general, if he does not mean to say much about things, the *one* character which he will give is color, using it with the most perfect mastery and faithfulness, up to the point of possible modern perception. For instance, if he has a sea-storm to paint in a single line, he does not, as a feebler poet would probably have done, use any expression about the temper or form of the waves; does not call them angry or mountainous. He is content to strike them out with two dashes of Tintoret's favorite colors:

> " *The blackening wave is edged with white;*
> To inch and rock the seamews fly."

There is no form in this. Nay, the main virtue of it is, that it gets rid of all form. The dark raging of the sea—what form has that? But out of the cloud of its darkness those lightning flashes of the foam, coming at their terrible intervals —you need no more.

Again: where he has to describe tents mingled among oaks, he says nothing about the form of either tent or tree, but only gives the two strokes of color:

> " Thousand pavilions, *white as snow,*
> *Chequered* the borough moor below,
> Oft giving way, where still there stood
> Some relics of the old oak wood,

That darkly huge did intervene,
*And tamed the glaring white with green.*"

Again: of tents at Flodden:

"Next morn the Baron climbed the tower,
To view, afar, the Scottish power,
Encamped on Flodden edge.
The white pavilions made a show,
Like remnants of the winter snow,
Along the dusky ridge."

Again: of trees mingled with dark rocks:

"Until, where Teith's young waters roll
Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
That graced the *sable* strath with *green*.
The chapel of St. Bride was seen."

Again: there is hardly any form, only smoke and color, in his celebrated description of Edinburgh:

"The wandering eye could o'er it go,
And mark the distant city glow
With gloomy splendor red;
For on the smoke-wreaths, huge and slow,
That round her sable turrets flow,
The morning beams were shed,
And tinged them with a lustre proud,
Like that which streaks a thunder-cloud.
Such dusky grandeur clothed the height,
Where the huge castle holds its state,
And all the steep slope down,
Whose ridgy back heaves to the sky,
Piled deep and massy, close and high,
Mine own romantic town!
But northward far with purer blaze,
On Ochil mountains fell the rays,

And as each heathy top they kissed,
It gleamed a purple amethyst.
Yonder the shores of Fife you saw;
Here Preston Bay and Berwick Law:
And, broad between them rolled,
The gallant Frith the eye might note,
Whose islands on its bosom float,
Like emeralds chased in gold."

I do not like to spoil a fine passage by italicizing it; but observe, the only hints at form, given throughout, are in the somewhat vague words, "ridgy," "massy," "close," and "high:" the whole being still more obscured by modern mystery, in its most tangible form of smoke. But the *colors* are all definite; note the rainbow band of them—gloomy or dusky red, sable (pure black), amethyst (pure purple), green, and gold—a noble chord throughout; and then, moved doubtless less by the smoky than the amethystine part of the group,

"Fitz Eustace' heart felt closely pent,
The spur he to his charger lent,
And raised his bridle hand.
And making demivolte in air,
Cried, 'Where's the coward would not dare
To fight for such a land?'"

I need not multiply examples: the reader can easily trace for himself, through verse familiar to us all, the force of these color instincts. I will therefore add only two passages, not so completely known by heart as most of the poems in which they occur.

"'Twas silence all. He laid him down
Where purple heath profusely strown,

And throatwort, with its azure bell.
And moss and thyme his cushion swell.
There, spent with toil, he listless eyed
The course of Greta's playful tide;
Beneath her banks, now eddying dun,
Now brightly gleaming to the sun,
As, dancing over rock and stone,
In yellow light her currents shone,
Matching in hue the favorite gem
Of Albin's mountain diadem.
Then tired to watch the current play,
He turned his weary eyes away
To where the bank opposing showed
Its huge square cliffs through shaggy wood.
One, prominent above the rest,
Reared to the sun its pale grey breast;
Around its broken summit grew
The hazel rude, and sable yew;
A thousand varied lichens dyed
Its waste and weather-beaten side;
And round its rugged basis lay,
By time or thunder rent away,
Fragments, that, from its frontlet torn,
Were mantled now by verdant thorn."

Note, first, what an exquisite chord of color is given in the succession of this passage. It begins with purple and blue; then passes to gold, or cairngorm color (topaz color); then to *pale grey*, through which the yellow passes into black; and the black, through broken dyes of lichen, into green. Note, secondly,—what is indeed so manifest throughout Scott's landscape as hardly to need pointing out,—the love of rocks, and true understanding of their colors and characters, opposed as it is in every conceivable way to Dante's hatred and misunderstanding of them.

I have already traced, in various places, most of the causes

of this great difference: namely, first, the ruggedness of northern temper (compare § 8. of the chapter on the Nature of Gothic in the Stones of Venice); then the really greater beauty of the northern rocks, as noted when we were speaking of the Apennine limestone; then the need of finding beauty among them, if it were to be found anywhere,—no well-arranged colors being any more to be seen in dress, but only in rock lichens; and, finally, the love of irregularity, liberty, and power, springing up in glorious opposition to laws of prosody, fashion, and the five orders.

The other passage I have to quote is still more interesting; because it has *no form* in it *at all* except in one word (chalice), but wholly composes its imagery either of color, or of that delicate half-believed life which we have seen to be so important an element in modern landscape.

" The summer dawn's reflected hue
*To purple changed Loch Katrine blue;*
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kissed the lake; just stirred the trees;
*And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,*
*Trembled, but dimpled not, for joy;*
The mountain-shadows on her breast
Were neither broken nor at rest;
In bright uncertainty they lie,
Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
The water-lily to the light
Her chalice reared of silver bright:
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
Begemmed with dew-drops, led her fawn;
The grey mist left the mountain side;
The torrent showed its glistening pride;
Invisible in fleckëd sky,
The lark sent down her revelry;
The blackbird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;

In answer cooed the cushat dove
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.'

Two more considerations are, however, suggested by the above passage. The first, that the love of natural history, excited by the continual attention now given to all wild landscape, heightens reciprocally the interest of that landscape, and becomes an important element in Scott's description, leading him to finish, down to the minutest speckling of breast, and slightest shade of attributed emotion, the portraiture of birds and animals; in strange opposition to Homer's slightly named "sea-crows, who have care of the works of the sea," and Dante's singing-birds, of undefined species. Compare carefully a passage, too long to be quoted,—the 2nd and 3rd stanzas of canto VI. of Rokeby.

The second, and the last point I have to note, is Scott's habit of drawing a slight *moral* from every scene, just enough to excuse to his conscience his want of definite religious feeling; and that this slight moral is almost always melancholy. Here he has stopped short without entirely expressing it—

"The mountain shadows
. . . . lie
Like future joys to Fancy's eye."

His completed thought would be, that those future joys, like the mountain shadows, were never to be attained. It occurs fully uttered in many other places. He seems to have been constantly rebuking his own worldly pride and vanity, but never purposefully:

"The foam-globes on her eddies ride,
Thick as the schemes of human pride
That down life's current drive amain,
As frail, as frothy, and as vain."

" Foxglove, and nightshade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride."

" Her dark eye flashed; she paused and sighed;—
' Ah, what have I to do with pride!' "

And hear the thought he gathers from the sunset (noting first the Turnerian color,—as usual, its principal element):

" The sultry summer day is done.
The western hills have hid the sun,
But mountain peak and village spire
Retain reflection of his fire.
Old Barnard's towers are purple still,
To those that gaze from Toller Hill;
Distant and high the tower of Bowes
Like steel upon the anvil glows;
And Stanmore's ridge, behind that lay,
Rich with the spoils of parting day,
In crimson and in gold arrayed,
Streaks yet awhile the closing shade;
Then slow resigns to darkening heaven
The tints which brighter hours had given.
Thus, aged men, full loth and slow,
The vanities of life forego,
And count their youthful follies o'er
Till Memory lends her light no more."

That is, as far as I remember, one of the most finished pieces of sunset he has given; and it has a woful moral; yet one which, with Scott, is inseparable from the scene.

Hark, again:

" 'Twere sweet to mark the setting day
On Bourhope's lonely top decay;
And, as it faint and feeble died
On the broad lake and mountain's side,

To say, 'Thus pleasures fade away;
Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,
And leave us dark, forlorn, and grey.'"

And again, hear Bertram:

"Mine be the eve of tropic sun:
With disk like battle target red,
He rushes to his burning bed,
Dyes the wide wave with bloody light,
Then sinks at once; and all is night."

In all places of this kind, where a passing thought is suggested by some external scene, that thought is at once a slight and sad one. Scott's deeper moral sense is marked in the *conduct* of his stories, and in casual reflections or exclamations arising out of their plot, and therefore sincerely uttered; as that of Marmion:

"Oh, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive!"

But the reflections which are founded, not on events, but on scenes, are, for the most part, shallow, partly insincere, and, as far as sincere, sorrowful. This habit of ineffective dreaming and moralizing over passing scenes, of which the earliest type I know is given in Jaques, is, as aforesaid, usually the satisfaction made to our modern consciences for the want of a sincere acknowledgment of God in nature: and Shakspere has marked it as the characteristic of a mind "compact of jars."

In the reading of a great poem, in the hearing of a noble oration, it is the subject of the writer and not his skill,—his

passion, not his power, on which our minds are fixed. We see as he sees, but we see not him. We become part of him, feel with him, judge, behold with him; but we think of him as little as of ourselves. Do we think of Æschylus while we wait on the silence of Cassandra, or of Shakspere, while we listen to the wailing of Lear? Not so. The power of the masters is known by their self-annihilation. It is commensurate with the degree in which they themselves appear not in their work. The harp of the minstrel is untruly touched, if his own glory is all that it truly records. Every great writer may be at once known by his guiding the mind far from himself to the beauty which is not of his creation, and the knowledge which is past his finding out.

I admit two orders of poets, but no third; and by these two orders I mean the Creative (Shakspere, Homer, Dante), and Reflective or Perceptive (Wordsworth, Keats, Tennyson). But both of these must be *first*-rate in their range, though their range is different; and with poetry second-rate in *quality* no one ought to be allowed to trouble mankind. There is quite enough of the best,—much more than we can ever read or enjoy in the length of a life; and it is a literal wrong or sin in any person to encumber us with inferior work. I have no patience with apologies made by young pseudo-poets, "that they believe there is *some* good in what they have written: that they hope to do better in time," &c. *Some* good! If there is not *all* good, there is no good. If they ever hope to do better, why do they trouble us now? Let them rather courageously burn all they have done, and wait for the better days. There are few men, ordinarily educated, who in moments of strong feeling could not strike out a poetical thought, and afterwards polish it so as to be presentable. But men of sense know better than so to waste their time; and those who sin-

cerely love poetry, know the touch of the master's hand on the chords too well to fumble among them after him. Nay, more than this; all inferior poetry is an injury to the good, inasmuch as it takes away the freshness of rhymes, blunders upon and gives a wretched commonalty to good thoughts; and, in general, adds to the weight of human weariness in a most woful and culpable manner. There are few thoughts likely to come across ordinary men, which have not already been expressed by greater men in the best possible way; and it is a wiser, more generous, more noble thing to remember and point out the perfect words, than to invent poorer ones, wherewith to encumber temporarily the world.

Keats, describing a wave, breaking, out at sea, says of it—

> "Down whose green back the short-lived foam, all hoar,
> Bursts gradual, with a wayward indolence."

That is quite perfect, as an example of the modern manner. The idea of the peculiar action with which foam rolls down a long, large wave could not have been given by any other words so well as by this "wayward indolence." But Homer would never have written, never thought of, such words. He could not by any possibility have lost sight of the great fact that the wave from the beginning to the end of it, do what it might, was still nothing else than salt water; and that salt water could not be either wayward or indolent. He will call the waves "over-roofed," "full-charged," "monstrous," "compact-black," "dark-clear," "violet-colored," "wine-colored," and so on. But every one of these epithets is descriptive of pure physical nature. "Over-roofed" is the term he invariably uses of anything—rock, house, or wave—that nods over at the brow; the other terms need no explanation; they are as

accurate and intense in truth as words can be, but they never show the slightest feeling of anything animated in the ocean. Black or clear, monstrous or violet-colored, cold salt water it is always, and nothing but that.

And thus, in full, there are four classes; the men who feel nothing, and therefore see truly; the men who feel strongly, think weakly, and see untruly (second order of poets); the men who feel strongly, think strongly, and see truly (first order of poets); and the men who, strong as human creatures can be, are yet submitted to influences stronger than they and see in a sort untruly, because what they see is inconceiv ably above them. This last is the usual condition of prophetic inspiration.

I separate these classes, in order that their character may be clearly understood; but of course they are united each to the other by imperceptible transitions, and the same mind, according to the influences to which it is subjected, passes at different times into the various states. Still, the difference between the great and less man is, on the whole, chiefly in this point of *alterability*. That is to say, the one knows too much, and perceives and feels too much of the past and future, and of all things beside and around that which immediately affects him, to be in any wise shaken by it. His mind is made up; his thoughts have an accustomed current; his ways are steadfast; it is not this or that new sight which will at once unbalance him. He is tender to impression at the surface, like a rock with deep moss upon it; but there is too much mass of him to be moved. The smaller man, with the same degree of sensibility, is at once carried off his feet; he wants to do something he did not want to do before; he views all the universe in a new light through his tears; he is gay or enthusiastic, melancholy or passionate, as things come and go to him. Therefore the high

creative poet might even be thought, to a great extent, impassive (as shallow people think Dante stern), receiving indeed all feelings to the full, but having a great centre of reflection and knowledge in which he stands serene, and watches the feeling, as it were, from far off.

Dante, in his most intense moods, has entire command of himself, and can look around calmly, at all moments, for the image or the word that will best tell what he sees to the upper or lower world. But Keats and Tennyson, and the poets of the second order, are generally themselves subdued by the feelings under which they write, or at least, write as choosing to be so, and therefore admit certain expressions and modes of thought which are in some sort diseased or false.

Now so long as we see that the *feeling* is true, we pardon, or are even pleased by, the confessed fallacy of sight which it induces. But the moment the mind of the speaker becomes cold, that moment every such expression becomes untrue, as being for ever untrue in the external facts. And there is no greater baseness in literature than the habit of using these metaphorical expressions in cool blood. An inspired writer, in full impetuosity of passion, may speak wisely and truly of "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame;" but it is only the basest writer who cannot speak of the sea without talking of "raging waves," "remorseless floods," "ravenous billows," &c.; and it is one of the signs of the highest power in a writer to check all such habits of thought, and to keep his eyes fixed firmly on the *pure fact*, out of which if any feeling comes to him or his reader, he knows it must be a true one.

To keep to the waves, I forget who it is who represents a man in despair, desiring that his body may be cast into the sea,

> "*Whose changing mound, and foam that passed away,*
> Might mock the eye that questioned where I lay."

Observe, there is not a single false, or even overcharged, expression. "Mound" of the sea wave is perfectly simple and true; "changing" is as familiar as may be; "foam that passed away," strictly literal; and the whole line descriptive of the reality with a degree of accuracy which I know not any other verse, in the range of poetry, that altogether equals. For most people have not a distinct idea of the clumsiness and massiveness of a large wave. The word "wave" is used too generally of ripples and breakers, and bendings in light drapery or grass; it does not by itself convey a perfect image. But the word "mound" is heavy, large, dark, definite; there is no mistaking the kind of wave meant, nor missing the sight of it. Then the term "changing" has a peculiar force also. Most people think of waves as rising and falling. But if they look at the sea carefully, they will perceive that the waves do not rise and fall. They change. Change both place and form, but they do not fall; one wave goes on, and on, and still on; now lower, now higher, now tossing its mane like a horse, now building itself together like a wall, now shaking, now steady, but still the same wave, till at last it seems struck by something, and changes, one knows not how,—becomes another wave.

The close of the line insists on this image, and paints it still more perfectly,—"foam that passed away." Not merely melting, disappearing, but passing on, out of sight, on the career of the wave. Then, having put the absolute ocean fact as far as he may before our eyes, the poet leaves us to feel about it as we may, and to trace for ourselves the opposite fact,—the image of the green mounds that do not change, and the white and written stones that do not pass away; and thence to follow out also the associated images of the calm life with the quiet grave, and the despairing life with the fading foam;—

"Let no man move his bones."

"As for Samaria, her king is cut off like the foam upon the water."

But nothing of this is actually told or pointed out, and the expressions, as they stand, are perfectly severe and accurate, utterly uninfluenced by the firmly governed emotion of the writer. Even the word "mock" is hardly an exception, as it may stand merely for "deceive" or "defeat," without implying any impersonation of the waves.

It may be well, perhaps, to give an instance to show the peculiar dignity possessed by all passages which limit their expression to the pure fact, and leave the hearer to gather what he can from it. Here is a notable one from the Iliad. Helen, looking from the Scæan gate of Troy over the Grecian host, and telling Priam the names of its captains, says at last:—

"I see all the other dark-eyed Greeks; but two I cannot see,—Castor and Pollux,—whom one mother bore with me. Have they not followed from fair Lacedæmon, or have they indeed come in their sea-wandering ships, but now will not enter into the battle of men, fearing the shame and the scorn that is in me?"

Then Homer:—

"So she spoke. But them, already, the life-giving earth possessed, there in Lacedæmon, in the dear fatherland."

Note, here, the high poetical truth carried to the extreme. The poet has to speak of the earth in sadness, but he will not let the sadness affect or change his thoughts of it. No; though Castor and Pollux be dead, yet the earth is our mother still, fruitful, life-giving. These are the facts of the thing. I see nothing else than these. Make what you will of them.

Take another very notable instance from Casimir de la Vigne's terrible ballad, "La Toilette de Constance." I must quote a few lines out of it here and there, to enable the reader who has not the book by him to understand its close.

"Vite, Anna, vite; au miroir
Plus vite, Anna. L'heure s'avance,
Et je vais au bal ce soir
Chez l'ambassadeur de France.

Y pensez vous, ils sont fanés, ces nœuds,
Ils sont d'hier, mon Dieu, comme tout passe!
Que du réseau qui retient mes cheveux
Les glands d'azur retombent avec grâce.

Plus haut! Plus bas! Vous ne comprenez rien!
Que sur mon front ce saphir étincelle:
Vous me piquez, mal-adroite. Ah, c'est bien,
Bien,—chère Anna! Je t'aime, je suis belle.

Celui qu'en vain je voudrais oublier
(Anna, ma robe) il y sera, j'espère.
(Ah, fi, profane, est-ce là mon collier?
Quoi! ces grains d'or bénits par le Saint Père!)
Il y sera; Dieu, s'il pressait ma main
En y pensant, à peine je respire:
Père Anselmo doit m'entendre demain,
Comment ferai-je, Anna, pour tout lui dire?

Vite, un coup d'œil au miroir,
Le dernier. ——— J'ai l'assurance
Qu'on va m'adorer ce soir
Chez l'ambassadeur de France.

Près du foyer, Constance s'admirait.
Dieu! sur sa robe il vole une étincelle!
Au feu. Courez; Quand l'espoir l'enivrait
Tout perdre ainsi! Quoi! Mourir,—et si belle!
L'horrible feu ronge avec volupté
Ses bras, son sein, et l'entoure, et s'élève,
Et sans pitie dévore sa beauté,
Ses dixhuit ans, hélas, et son doux rêve!

Adieu, bal, plaisir, amour!
On disait, Pauvre Constance!
Et on dansait, jusqu'au jour,
Chez l'ambassadeur de France."

Yes, that is the fact of it. Right or wrong, the poet does not say. What you may think about it, he does not know. He has nothing to do with that. There lie the ashes of the dead girl in her chamber. There they danced, till the morning, at the Ambassador's of France. Make what you will of it.

If the reader will look through the ballad, of which I have quoted only about the third part, he will find that there is not, from beginning to end of it, a single poetical (so called) expression, except in one stanza. The girl speaks as simple prose as may be; there is not a word she would not have actually used as she was dressing. The poet stands by, impassive as a statue, recording her words just as they come. At last the doom seizes her, and in the very presence of death, for an instant, his own emotions conquer him. He records no longer the facts only, but the facts as they seem to him. The fire gnaws with *voluptuousness—without pity.* It is soon past. The fate is fixed for ever; and he retires into his pale and crystalline atmosphere of truth. He closes all with the calm veracity,

"They said, 'Poor Constance!'"

Now in this there is the exact type of the consummate poetical temperament. For, be it clearly and constantly remembered, that the greatness of a poet depends upon the two faculties, acuteness of feeling, and command of it. A poet is great, first in proportion to the strength of his passion, and then, that strength being granted, in proportion to his government of it; there being, however, always a point beyond which it would be inhuman and monstrous if he pushed this govern-

ment, and, therefore, a point at which all feverish and wild fancy becomes just and true. Thus the destruction of the kingdom of Assyria cannot be contemplated firmly by a prophet of Israel. The fact is too great, too wonderful. It overthrows him, dashes him into a confused element of dreams. All the world is, to his stunned thought, full of strange voices. "Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, 'Since thou art gone down to the grave, no feller is come up against us.'" So, still more, the thought of the presence of Deity cannot be borne without this great astonishment. "The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands."

But by how much this feeling is noble when it is justified by the strength of its cause, by so much it is ignoble when there is not cause enough for it; and beyond all other ignobleness is the mere affectation of it, in hardness of heart. Simply bad writing may almost always, as above noticed, be known by its adoption of these fanciful metaphorical expressions, as a sort of current coin; yet there is even a worse, at least a more harmful, condition of writing than this, in which such expressions are not ignorantly and feelinglessly caught up, but, by some master, skilful in handling, yet insincere, deliberately wrought out with chill and studied fancy; as if we should try to make an old lava stream look red-hot again, by covering it with dead leaves, or white-hot, with hoar-frost.

When Young is lost in veneration, as he dwells on the character of a truly good and holy man, he permits himself for a moment to be overborne by the feeling so far as to exclaim—

> "Where shall I find him? angels, tell me where.
> You know him; he is near you; point him out.
> Shall I see glories beaming from his brow,
> Or trace his footsteps by the rising flowers?"

This emotion has a worthy cause, and is thus true and right. But now hear the cold-hearted Pope say to a shepherd girl—

> "Where'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade!
> Trees, where you sit, shall crowd into a shade;
> Your praise the birds shall chant in every grove,
> And winds shall waft it to the powers above.
> But would you sing, and rival Orpheus' strain,
> The wondering forests soon should dance again;
> The moving mountains hear the powerful call,
> And headlong streams hang, listening, in their fall."

This is not, nor could it for a moment be mistaken for, the language of passion. It is simple falsehood, uttered by hypocrisy; definite absurdity, rooted in affectation, and coldly asserted in the teeth of nature and fact. Passion will indeed go far in deceiving itself; but it must be a strong passion, not the simple wish of a lover to tempt his mistress to sing. Compare a very closely parallel passage in Wordsworth, in which the lover has lost his mistress:

> "Three years had Barbara in her grave been laid,
> When thus his moan he made:—
>
> 'Oh, move, thou cottage, from behind yon oak,
> Or let the ancient tree uprooted lie,
> That in some other way yon smoke
> May mount into the sky.
> If still behind yon pine-tree's ragged bough,
> Headlong, the waterfall must come,
> Oh, let it, then, be dumb—
> Be anything, sweet stream, but that which thou art now.'"

Here is a cottage to be moved, if not a mountain, and a waterfall to be silent, if it is not to hang listening; but with

what different relation to the mind that contemplates them! Here, in the extremity of its agony, the soul cries out wildly for relief, which at the same moment it partly knows to be impossible, but partly believes possible, in a vague impression that a miracle *might* be wrought to give relief even to a less sore distress,—that nature is kind, and God is kind, and that grief is strong; it knows not well what *is* possible to such grief. To silence a stream, to move a cottage wall,—one might think it could do as much as that!

I believe these instances are enough to illustrate the main point I insist upon respecting the pathetic fallacy,—that so far as it *is* a fallacy, it is always the sign of a morbid state of mind, and comparatively of a weak one. Even in the most inspired prophet it is a sign of the incapacity of his human sight or thought to bear what has been revealed to it. In ordinary poetry, if it is found in the thoughts of the poet himself, it is at once a sign of his belonging to the inferior school; if in the thoughts of the characters imagined by him, it is right or wrong according to the genuineness of the emotion from which it springs; always, however, implying necessarily *some* degree of weakness in the character.

Take two most exquisite instances from master hands. The Jessy of Shenstone, and the Ellen of Wordsworth, have both been betrayed and deserted. Jessy, in the course of her most touching complaint, says:

> "If through the garden's flowery tribes I stray,
> Where bloom the jasmines that could once allure,
> 'Hope not to find delight in us,' they say,
> 'For we are spotless, Jessy; we are pure.'"

Compare with this some of the words of Ellen:

> "'Ah, why,' said Ellen, sighing to herself,
> 'Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn pledge,

And nature, that is kind in woman's breast,
And reason, that in man is wise and good,
And fear of Him who is a righteous Judge,—
Why do not these prevail for human life,
To keep two hearts together, that began
Their springtime with one love, and that have need
Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet
To grant, or be received; while that poor bird—
O, come and hear him! Thou who hast to me
Been faithless, hear him;—though a lowly creature,
One of God's simple children, that yet know not
The Universal Parent, *how* he sings!
As if he wished the firmament of heaven
Should listen, and give back to him the voice
Of his triumphant constancy and love.
The proclamation that he makes, how far
His darkness doth transcend our fickle light.'"

The perfection of both these passages, as far as regards truth and tenderness of imagination in the two poets, is quite insuperable. But, of the two characters imagined, Jessy is weaker than Ellen, exactly in so far as something appears to her to be in nature which is not. The flowers do not really reproach her. God meant them to comfort her, not to taunt her; they would do so if she saw them rightly.

Ellen, on the other hand, is quite above the slightest erring emotion. There is not the barest film of fallacy in all her thoughts. She reasons as calmly as if she did not feel. And, although the singing of the bird suggests to her the idea of its desiring to be heard in heaven, she does not for an instant admit any veracity in the thought. "As if," she says,—"I know he means nothing of the kind; but it does verily seem as if." The reader will find, by examining the rest of the poem, that Ellen's character is throughout consistent in this clear though passionate strength.

It then being, I hope, now made clear to the reader in all respects that the pathetic fallacy is powerful only so far as it is pathetic, feeble so far as it is fallacious, and, therefore, that the dominion of Truth is entire, over this, as over every other natural and just state of the human mind, we may go on to the subject for the dealing with which this prefatory inquiry became necessary; and why necessary, we shall see forthwith.*

Very frequently things which appear to us ignoble are merely the simplicities of a pure and truthful age. When Juno beats Diana about the ears with her own quiver, for instance, we start at first, as if Homer could not have believed that they were both real goddesses. But what should Juno have done? Killed Diana with a look? Nay, she neither wished to do so, nor could she have done so, by the very faith of Diana's goddess-ship. Diana is as immortal as herself. Frowned Diana into submission? But Diana has come expressly to try conclusions with her, and will by no means be frowned into submission. Wounded her with a celestial lance? That sounds more poetical, but it is in reality partly more savage, and partly more absurd, than Homer. More savage, for it makes

*I cannot quit this subject without giving two more instances, both exquisite, of the pathetic fallacy, which I have just come upon, in Maude:

"For a great speculation had fail'd;
And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever wann'd with despair;
And out he walk'd, when the wind like a broken worldling wail'd,
And the *flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro' the air.*"

"There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
*The red rose cries, 'She is near, she is near!'*
*And the white rose weeps, 'She is late,'*
*The larkspur listens, 'I hear, I hear!'*
*And the lily whispers, 'I wait.'*"

Juno more cruel, therefore less divine; and more absurd, for it only seems elevated in tone, because we use the word "celestial," which means nothing. What sort of a thing is a "celestial" lance? Not a wooden one. Of what then? Of moonbeams, or clouds, or mist. Well, therefore, Diana's arrows were of mist too; and her quiver, and herself, and Juno with her lance, and all, vanish into mist. Why not have said at once, if that is all you mean, that two mists met, and one drove the other back? That would have been rational and intelligible, but not to talk of celestial lances. Homer had no such misty fancy; he believed the two goddesses were there in true bodies, with true weapons, on the true earth; and still I ask what should Juno have done? Not beaten Diana? No; for it is un-lady-like. Un-English-lady-like, yes; but by no means un-Greek-lady-like, nor even un-natural-lady-like. If a modern lady does *not* beat her servant or her rival about the ears, it is oftener because she is too weak, or too proud, than because she is of purer mind than Homer's Juno. She will not strike them; but she will overwork the one or slander the other without pity; and Homer would not have thought that one whit more goddess-like than striking them with her open hand.

What, then, was actually the Greek god? In what way were these two ideas of human form, and divine power, credibly associated in the ancient heart, so as to become a subject of true faith, irrespective equally of fable, allegory, superstitious trust in stone, and demoniacal influence?

It seems to me that the Greek had exactly the same instinctive feeling about the elements that we have ourselves; that to Homer, as much as to Casimir de la Vigne, fire seemed ravenous and pitiless; to Homer, as much as to Keats, the sea-wave appeared wayward or idle, or whatever else it may be to the poetical passion. The Greek never removed his god out of

nature at all; never attempted for a moment to contradict his instinctive sense that God was everywhere. "The tree *is* glad," said he, "I know it is; I can cut it down; no matter, there was a nymph in it. The water *does* sing," said he; "I can dry it up; but no matter, there was a naiad in it." But in thus clearly defining his belief, observe, he threw it entirely into a human form, and gave his faith to nothing but the image of his own humanity. What sympathy and fellowship he had, were always for the spirit *in* the stream, not for the stream; always for the dryad *in* the wood, not for the wood. Content with this human sympathy, he approached the actual waves and woody fibres with no sympathy at all. The spirit that ruled them, he received as a plain fact. Them, also, ruled and material, he received as plain facts; they, without their spirit, were dead enough. A rose was good for scent, and a stream for sound and coolness; for the rest, one was no more than leaves, the other no more than water; he could not make anything else of them; and the divine power which was involved in their existence, having been all distilled away by him into an independent Flora or Thetis, the poor leaves or waves were left, in mere cold corporealness, to make the most of their being discernibly red and soft, clear and wet, and unacknowledged in any other power whatsoever.

Then, observe farther, the Greeks lived in the midst of the most beautiful nature, and were as familiar with blue sea, clear air, and sweet outlines of mountain, as we are with brick walls, black smoke, and level fields. This perfect familiarity rendered all such scenes of natural beauty unexciting, if not indifferent to them, by lulling and overwearying the imagination as far as it was concerned with such things; but there was another kind of beauty which they found required effort to obtain, and which, when thoroughly obtained, seemed more glorious than any of this wild loveliness—the beauty of the human

countenance and form. This, they perceived, could only be reached by continual exercise of virtue; and it was in Heaven's sight, and theirs, all the more beautiful because it needed this self-denial to obtain it. So they set themselves to reach this, and having gained it, gave it their principal thoughts, and set it off with beautiful dress as best they might. But making this their object, they were obliged to pass their lives in simple exercise and disciplined employments. Living wholesomely, giving themselves no fever fits, either by fasting or over-eating, constantly in the open air, and full of animal spirit and physical power, they became incapable of every morbid condition of mental emotion. Unhappy love, disappointed ambition, spiritual despondency, or any other disturbing sensation, had little power over the well-braced nerves, and healthy flow of the blood; and what bitterness might yet fasten on them was soon boxed or raced out of a boy, and spun or woven out of a girl, or danced out of both. They had indeed their sorrows, true and deep, but still, more like children's sorrows than ours, whether bursting into open cry of pain, or hid with shuddering under the veil, still passing over the soul as clouds do over heaven, not sullying it, not mingling with it;—darkening it perhaps long or utterly, but still not becoming one with it, and for the most part passing away in dashing rain of tears, and leaving the man unchanged; in nowise affecting, as our sorrow does, the whole tone of his thought and imagination thenceforward.

How far our melancholy may be deeper and wider than theirs, in its roots and view, and therefore nobler, we shall consider presently; but at all events, they had the advantage of us in being entirely free from all those dim and feverish sensations which result from unhealthy state of the body. I believe that a large amount of the dreamy and sentimental sadness, tendency to reverie, and general patheticalness of modern life results merely from derangement of stomach;

holding to the Greek life the same relation that the feverish night of an adult does to a child's sleep.

Farther. The human beauty, which, whether in its bodily being or in imagined divinity, had become, for the reasons we have seen, the principal object of culture and sympathy to these Greeks, was, in its perfection, eminently orderly, symmetrical, and tender. Hence, contemplating it constantly in this state, they could not but feel a proportionate fear of all that was disorderly, unbalanced, and rugged. Having trained their stoutest soldiers into a strength so delicate and lovely, that their white flesh, with their blood upon it, should look like ivory stained with purple;* and having always around them, in the motion and majesty of this beauty, enough for the full employment of their imagination, they shrank with dread or hatred from all the ruggedness of lower nature,—from the wrinkled forest bark, the jagged hill-crest, and irregular, inorganic storm of sky; looking to these for the most part as adverse powers, and taking pleasure only in such portions of the lower world as were at once conducive to the rest and health of the human frame, and in harmony with the laws of its gentler beauty.

I know many persons who have the purest taste in literature, and yet false taste in art, and it is a phenomenon which puzzles me not a little; but I have never known any one with false taste in books, and true taste in pictures. It is also of the greatest importance to you, not only for art's sake, but for all kinds of sake, in these days of book deluge, to keep out of the salt swamps of literature, and live on a little rocky island of your own, with a spring and a lake in it, pure and good. I cannot, of course, suggest the choice of your library

* Iliad iv. 141.

to you, every several mind needs different books; but there are some books which we all need, and assuredly, if you read Homer,* Plato, Æschylus, Herodotus, Dante,† Shakspeare, and Spenser, as much as you ought, you will not require wide enlargement of shelves to right and left of them for purposes of perpetual study. Among modern books, avoid generally magazine and review literature. Sometimes it may contain a useful abridgement or a wholesome piece of criticism; but the chances are ten to one it will either waste your time or mislead you. If you want to understand any subject whatever, read the best book upon it you can hear of; not a review of the book. If you don't like the first book you try, seek for another; but do not hope ever to understand the subject without pains, by a reviewer's help. Avoid especially that class of literature which has a knowing tone; it is the most poisonous of all. Every good book, or piece of book, is full of admiration and awe; it may contain firm assertion, or stern satire, but it never sneers coldly, nor asserts haughtily, and it always leads you to reverence or love something with your whole heart. It is not always easy to distinguish the satire of the venomous race of books from the satire of the noble and pure ones; but in general you may notice that the cold-blooded Crustacean and Batrachian books will sneer at sentiment; and the warm-blooded, human books, at sin. Then, in general, the more you can restrain your serious reading to reflective or lyric poetry, history, and natural history, avoiding fiction and the drama,

* Chapman's, if not the original.

† Carey's or Cayley's, if not the original. I do not know which are the best translations of Plato. Herodotus and Æschylus can only be read in the original. It may seem strange that I name books like these for "beginners:" but all the greatest books contain food for all ages; and an intelligent and rightly bred youth or girl ought to enjoy much, even in Plato, by the time they are fifteen or sixteen.

the healthier your mind will become. Of modern poetry keep to Scott, Wordsworth, Keats, Crabbe, Tennyson, the two Brownings, Lowell, Longfellow, and Coventry Patmore, whose "Angel in the House" is a most finished piece of writing, and the sweetest analysis we possess of quiet modern domestic feeling; while Mrs. Browning's "Aurora Leigh" is, as far as I know, the greatest poem which the century has produced in any language. Cast Coleridge at once aside, as sickly and useless; and Shelley, as shallow and verbose; Byron, until your taste is fully formed, and you are able to discern the magnificence in him from the wrong. Never read bad or common poetry, nor write any poetry yourself; there is, perhaps, rather too much than too little in the world already.

Of reflective prose, read chiefly Bacon, Johnson, and Helps. Carlyle is hardly to be named as a writer for "beginners," because his teaching, though to some of us vitally necessary, may to others be hurtful. If you understand and like him, read him; if he offends you, you are not yet ready for him, and perhaps may never be so; at all events, give him up, as you would sea-bathing if you found it hurt you, till you are stronger. Of fiction, read Sir Charles Grandison, Scott's novels, Miss Edgeworth's, and, if you are a young lady, Madame de Genlis', the French Miss Edgeworth; making these, I mean, your constant companions. Of course you must, or will, read other books for amusement, once or twice; but you will find that these have an element of perpetuity in them, existing in nothing else of their kind; while their peculiar quietness and repose of manner will also be of the greatest value in teaching you to feel the same characters in art. Read little at a time, trying to feel interest in little things, and reading not so much for the sake of the story as to get acquainted with the pleasant people into whose company these writers bring you. A common book will often give you much amuse-

ment, but it is only a noble book which will give you dear friends. Remember also that it is of less importance to you in your earlier years, that the books you read should be clever, than that they should be right. I do not mean oppressively or repulsively instructive; but that the thoughts they express should be just, and the feelings they excite generous. It is not necessary for you to read the wittiest or the most suggestive books: it is better, in general, to hear what is already known, and may be simply said. Much of the literature of the present day, though good to be read by persons of ripe age, has a tendency to agitate rather than confirm, and leaves its readers too frequently in a helpless or hopeless indignation, the worst possible state into which the mind of youth can be thrown. It may, indeed, become necessary for you, as you advance in life, to set your hand to things that need to be altered in the world, or apply your heart chiefly to what must be pitied in it, or condemned; but, for a young person, the safest temper is one of reverence, and the safest place one of obscurity. Certainly at present, and perhaps through all your life, your teachers are wisest when they make you content in quiet virtue, and that literature and art are best for you which point out, in common life and familiar things, the objects for hopeful labor, and for humble love.

## Part 7.

# MORALS AND RELIGION.

Next to Sincerity, remember still,
Thou must resolve upon *Integrity.*
God will have *all* thou hast; thy mind, thy will,
Thy thoughts, thy words, thy works.

GEORGE HERBERT

# Part 7.

## MORALS AND RELIGION.

The Bible is specifically distinguished from all other early literature, by its delight in natural imagery; and the dealings of God with his people are calculated peculiarly to awaken this sensibility within them. Out of the monotonous valley of Egypt they are instantly taken into the midst of the mightiest mountain scenery in the peninsula of Arabia; and that scenery is associated in their minds with the immediate manifestation and presence of the Divine Power; so that mountains for ever afterwards become invested with a peculiar sacredness in their minds; while their descendants being placed in what was then one of the loveliest districts upon the earth, full of glorious vegetation, bounded on one side by the sea, on the north by "that goodly mountain" Lebanon, on the south and east by deserts, whose barrenness enhanced by their contrast the sense of the perfection of beauty in their own land, they became, by these means, and by the touch of God's own hand upon their hearts, sensible to the appeal of natural scenery in a way in which no other people were at the time; and their literature is full of expressions, not only testifying a vivid sense of the power of nature over man, but showing that *sympathy with natural things themselves*, as if they had human souls, which is the especial characteristic of true love of the works of God. I intended to have insisted on this sympathy at greater length, but I found, only two or three days ago, much of what I had to say to you anticipated in a little book, unpretending, but

full of interest, "The Lamp and the Lantern," by Dr. James Hamilton; and I will therefore only ask you to consider such expressions as that tender and glorious verse in Isaiah, speaking of the cedars on the mountains as rejoicing over the fall of the king of Assyria: "Yea, the fir-trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, Since *thou* art gone down to the grave, no feller is come up against us." See what sympathy there is here, as if with the very hearts of the trees themselves. So also in the words of Christ, in his personification of the lilies: "They toil not, neither do they spin." Consider such expressions as, "The sea saw that, and fled. Jordan was driven back. The mountains skipped like rams; and the little hills like lambs." Try to find anything in profane writing like this; and note farther that the whole book of Job appears to have been chiefly written and placed in the inspired volume in order to show the value of natural history, and its power on the human heart. I cannot pass by it without pointing out the evidences of the beauty of the country that Job inhabited.

Observe, first, it was an arable country. "The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them." It was a pastoral country: his substance, besides camels and asses, was 7000 sheep. It was a mountain country, fed by streams descending from the high snows. "My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away; which are blackish by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid: What time they wax warm they vanish: when it is hot they are consumed out of their place." Again: "If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean." Again: "Drought and heat consume the snow waters." It was a rocky country, with forests and verdure rooted in the rocks. "His branch shooteth forth in his garden; his roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones." Again: "Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field." It was a place visited,

like the valleys of Switzerland, by convulsions and falls of mountains. "Surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place." "The waters wear the stones: thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth." "He removeth the mountains and they know not: he overturneth them in his anger." "He putteth forth his hand upon the rock: he overturneth the mountains by the roots: he cutteth out rivers among the rocks." I have not time to go farther into this; but you see Job's country was one like your own, full of pleasant brooks and rivers, rushing among the rocks, and of all other sweet and noble elements of landscape. The magnificent allusions to natural scenery throughout the book are therefore calculated to touch the heart to the end of time.

Then at the central point of Jewish prosperity, you have the first great naturalist the world ever saw, Solomon; not permitted, indeed, to anticipate, in writing, the discoveries of modern times, but so gifted as to show us that heavenly wisdom is manifested as much in the knowledge of the hyssop that springeth out of the wall as in political and philosophical speculation.

The books of the Old Testament, as distinguished from all other early writings, are thus prepared for an everlasting influence over humanity; and, finally, Christ himself, setting the concluding example to the conduct and thoughts of men, spends nearly his whole life in the fields, the mountains, or the small country villages of Judea; and in the very closing scenes of his life, will not so much as sleep within the walls of Jerusalem, but rests at the little village of Bethphage, walking in the morning, and returning in the evening, through the peaceful avenues of the mount of Olives, to and from his work of teaching in the temple.

It would thus naturally follow, both from the general tone

and teaching of the Scriptures, and from the example of our Lord himself, that wherever Christianity was preached and accepted, there would be an immediate interest awakened in the works of God, as seen in the natural world.

The whole force of education, until very lately, has been directed in every possible way to the destruction of the love of nature. The only knowledge which has been considered essential among us is that of words, and, next after it, of the abstract sciences; while every liking shown by children for simple natural history has been either violently checked, (if it took an inconvenient form for the housemaids,) or else scrupulously limited to hours of play: so that it has really been impossible for any child earnestly to study the works of God but against its conscience; and the love of nature has become inherently the characteristic of truants and idlers. While also the art of drawing, which is of more real importance to the human race than that of writing (because people can hardly draw anything without being of some use both to themselves and others, and can hardly write anything without wasting their own time and that of others),—this art of drawing, I say, which on plain and stern system should be taught to every child, just as writing is,—has been so neglected and abused, that there is not one man in a thousand, even of its professed teachers, who knows its first principles: and thus it needs much ill-fortune or obstinacy—much neglect on the part of his teachers, or rebellion on his own—before a boy can get leave to use his eyes or his fingers; so that those who *can* use them are for the most part neglected or rebellious lads—runaways and bad scholars—passionate, erratic, self-willed, and restive against all forms of education; while your well-behaved and amiable scholars are disciplined into blindness and palsy of half their faculties. Wherein there is at once a notable ground for what difference

we have observed between the lovers of nature and its despisers; between the somewhat immoral and unrespectable watchfulness of the one, and the moral and respectable blindness of the other.

One more argument remains, and that, I believe, an unanswerable one. As, by the accident of education, the love of nature has been, among us, associated with *wilfulness*, so, by the accident of time, it has been associated with *faithlessness*. I traced, above, the peculiar mode in which this faithlessness was indicated; but I never intended to imply, therefore, that it was an invariable concomitant of the love. Because it happens that, by various concurrent operations of evil, we have been led, according to those words of the Greek poet already quoted, "to dethrone the gods, and crown the whirlwind," it is no reason that we should forget there was once a time when "the Lord answered Job *out of* the whirlwind." And if we now take final and full view of the matter, we shall find that the love of nature, wherever it has existed, has been a faithful and sacred element of human feeling; that is to say, supposing all circumstances otherwise the same with respect to two individuals, the one who loves nature most will be *always* found to have more *faith in God* than the other. It is intensely difficult, owing to the confusing and counter influences which always mingle in the data of the problem, to make this abstraction fairly; but so far as we can do it, so far, I boldly assert, the result is constantly the same: the nature-worship will be found to bring with it such a sense of the presence and power of a Great Spirit as no mere reasoning can either induce or controvert; and where that nature-worship is innocently pursued,—i.e. with due respect to other claims on time, feeling, and exertion, and associated with the higher principles of religion,—it becomes the channel of certain sacred truths, which by no other means can be conveyed.

This is not a statement which any investigation is needed to prove. It comes to us at once from the highest of all authority. The greater number of the words which are recorded in Scripture, as directly spoken to men by the lips of the Deity, are either simple revelations of His law, or special threatenings, commands, and promises relating to special events. But two passages of God's speaking, one in the Old and one in the New Testament, possess, it seems to me, a different character from any of the rest, having been uttered, the one to effect the last necessary change in the mind of a man whose piety was in other respects perfect; and the other, as the first statement to all men of the principles of Christianity by Christ Himself—I mean the 38th to 41st chapters of the book of Job, and the Sermon on the Mount. Now, the first of these passages is, from beginning to end, nothing else than a direction of the mind which was to be perfected to humble observance to the works of God in nature. And the other consists only in the inculcation of *three* things: 1st, right conduct; 2nd, looking for eternal life; 3rd, trusting God, through watchfulness of His dealings with His creation: and the entire contents of the book of Job, and of the Sermon on the Mount, will be found resolvable simply into these three requirements from all men,—that they should act rightly, hope for heaven, and watch God's wonders and work in the earth; the right conduct being always summed up under the three heads of *justice*, *mercy*, and *truth*, and no mention of any doctrical point whatsoever occurring in either piece of divine teaching.

As far as I can judge of the ways of men, it seems to me that the simplest and most necessary truths are always the last believed; and I suppose that well-meaning people in general would rather regulate their conduct and creed by almost any other portion of Scripture whatsoever, than by that Sermon on the Mount which contains the things that Christ thought it first

necessary for all men to understand. Nevertheless, I believe the time will soon come for the full force of these two passages of Scripture to be accepted. Instead of supposing the love of nature necessarily connected with the faithlessness of the age, I believe it is connected properly with the benevolence and liberty of the age; that it is precisely the most healthy element which distinctively belongs to us; and that out of it, cultivated no longer in levity or ignorance, but in earnestness and as a duty, results will spring of an importance at present inconceivable; and lights arise, which, for the first time in man's history, will reveal to him the true nature of his life, the true field for his energies, and the true relations between him and his Maker.

I will not endeavor here to trace the various modes in which these results are likely to be effected, for this would involve an essay on education, on the uses of natural history, and the probable future destiny of nations. Somewhat on these subjects I have spoken in other places; and I hope to find time, and proper place, to say more. But one or two observations may be made merely to suggest the directions in which the reader may follow out the subject for himself.

The great mechanical impulses of the age, of which most of us are so proud, are a mere passing fever, half-speculative, half-childish. People will discover at last that royal roads to anything can no more be laid in iron than they can in dust; that there are, in fact, no royal roads to anywhere worth going to; that if there were, it would that instant cease to be worth going to,—I mean so far as the things to be obtained are in any way estimable in terms of *price*. For there are two classes of precious things in the world: those that God gives us for nothing—sun, air, and life (both mortal life and immortal); and the secondarily precious things which he gives us for a price: these secondarily precious things, worldly wine and milk,

can only be bought for definite money; they never can be cheapened. No cheating nor bargaining will ever get a single thing out of nature's "establishment" at half-price. Do we want to be strong?—we must work. To be hungry?—we must starve. To be happy?—we must be kind. To be wise?—we must look and think. No changing of place at a hundred miles an hour, nor making of stuffs a thousand yards a minute, will make us one whit stronger, happier, or wiser. There was always more in the world than men could see, walked they ever so slowly; they will see it no better for going fast. And they will at last, and soon too, find out that their grand inventions for conquering (as they think) space and time, do, in reality, conquer nothing; for space and time are, in their own essence, unconquerable, and besides did not want any sort of conquering; they wanted *using*. A fool always wants to shorten space and time: a wise man wants to lengthen both. A fool wants to kill space and kill time: a wise man, first to gain them, then to animate them. Your railroad, when you come to understand it, is only a device for making the world smaller: and as for being able to talk from place to place, that is, indeed, well and convenient; but suppose you have, originally, nothing to say.* We shall be obliged at last to confess, what we should long ago have known, that the really precious things are thought and sight, not pace. It does a bullet no good to go fast; and a man, no harm to go slow; for his glory is not at all in going, but in being.

"Well; but railroads and telegraphs are so useful for communicating knowledge to savage nations." Yes, if you have any to give them. If you know nothing *but* railroads, and can communicate nothing but aqueous vapor and gunpowder,

* "The light-outspeeding telegraph
Bears nothing on its beam." EMERSON.

—what then? But if you have any other thing than those to give, then the railroad is of use only because it communicates that other thing; and the question is—what that other thing may be. Is it religion? I believe if we had really wanted to communicate that, we could have done it in less than 1800 years, without steam. Most of the good religious communication that I remember has been done on foot; and it cannot be easily done faster than at foot pace. Is it science? But what science—of motion, meat, and medicine? Well; when you have moved your savage, and dressed your savage, fed him with white bread, and shown him how to set a limb,—what next? Follow out that question. Suppose every obstacle overcome; give your savage every advantage of civilization to the full; suppose that you have put the red Indian in tight shoes; taught the Chinese how to make Wedgwood's ware, and to paint it with colors that will rub off; and persuaded all Hindoo women that it is more pious to torment their husbands into graves than to burn themselves at the burial,—what next? Gradually, thinking on from point to point, we shall come to perceive that all true happiness and nobleness are near us, and yet neglected by us; and that till we have learned how to be happy and noble, we have not much to tell, even to Red Indians. The delights of horse-racing and hunting, of assemblies in the night instead of the day, of costly and wearisome music, of costly and burdensome dress, of chagrined contention for place or power, or wealth, or the eyes of the multitude; and all the endless occupation without purpose, and idleness without rest, of our vulgar world, are not, it seems to me, enjoyments we need be ambitious to communicate. And all real and wholesome enjoyments possible to man have been just as possible to him, since first he was made of the earth, as they are now; and they are possible to him chiefly in peace. To watch the corn grow, and the blossoms

set; to draw hard breath over ploughshare or spade; to read, to think, to love, to hope, to pray,—these are the things that make men happy; they have always had the power of doing these, they never *will* have power to do more. The world's prosperity or adversity depends upon our knowing and teaching these few things: but upon iron, or glass, or electricity, or steam, in no wise.

And I am Utopian and enthusiastic enough to believe, that the time will come when the world will discover this. It has now made its experiments in every possible direction but the right one; and it seems that it must, at last, try the right one, in a mathematical necessity. It has tried fighting, and preaching, and fasting, buying and selling, pomp and parsimony, pride and humiliation,—every possible manner of existence in which it could conjecture there was any happiness or dignity; and all the while, as it bought, sold, and fought, and fasted, and wearied itself with policies, and ambitions, and self-denials, God had placed its real happiness in the keeping of the little mosses of the wayside, and of the clouds of the firmament. Now and then a weary king, or a tormented slave, found out where the true kingdoms of the world were, and possessed himself, in a furrow or two of garden ground, of a truly infinite dominion. But the world would not believe their report, and went on trampling down the mosses, and forgetting the clouds, and seeking happiness in its own way, until, at last, blundering and late, came natural science; and in natural science not only the observation of things, but the finding out of new uses for them. Of course the world, having a choice left to it, went wrong as usual, and thought that these mere material uses were to be the sources of its happiness. It got the clouds packed into iron cylinders, and made it carry its wise self at their own cloud pace. It got weavable fibres out of the mosses, and made clothes for itself, cheap and fine,—here was

happiness at last. To go as fast as the clouds, and manufacture everything out of anything,—here was paradise indeed!

And now, when, in a little while, it is unparadised again, if there were any other mistake that the world could make, it would of course make it. But I see not that there is any other; and, standing fairly at its wits' end, having found that going fast, when it is used to it, is no more paradisiacal than going slow; and that all the prints and cottons in Manchester cannot make it comfortable in its mind, I do verily believe it will come, finally, to understand that God paints the clouds and shapes the moss-fibres, that men may be happy in seeing Him at His work, and that in resting quietly beside Him, and watching His working, and—according to the power He has communicated to ourselves, and the guidance He grants,—in carrying out His purposes of peace and charity among all His creatures, are the only real happinesses that ever were, or will be, possible to mankind.

How far art is capable of helping us in such happiness we hardly yet know; but I hope to be able, in the subsequent parts of this work, to give some data for arriving at a conclusion in the matter. Enough has been advanced to relieve the reader from any lurking suspicion of unworthiness in our subject, and to induce him to take interest in the mind and work of the great painter who has headed the landscape school among us. What further considerations may, within any reasonable limits, be put before him, respecting the effect of natural scenery on the human heart, I will introduce in their proper places either as we examine, under Turner's guidance, the different classes of scenery, or at the close of the whole work; and therefore I have only one point more to notice here, namely, the exact relation between landscape-painting and natural science, properly so called.

For it may be thought that I have rashly assumed that the

Scriptural authorities above quoted apply to that partly superficial view of nature which is taken by the landscape-painter, instead of to the accurate view taken by the man of science. So far from there being rashness in such an assumption, the whole language, both of the book of Job and the Sermon on the Mount, gives precisely the view of nature which is taken by the uninvestigating affection of a humble, but powerful mind. There is no dissection of muscles or counting of elements, but the boldest and broadest glance at the apparent facts, and the most magnificent metaphor in expressing them. "His eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him." And in the often repeated, never obeyed, command, "Consider the lilies of the field," observe there is precisely the delicate attribution of life which we have seen to be the characteristic of the modern view of landscape,—"They toil not." There is no science, or hint of science; no counting of petals, nor display of provisions for sustenance: nothing but the expression of sympathy, at once the most childish, and the most profound,—"They toil not."

And we see in this, therefore, that the instinct which leads us thus to attribute life to the lowest forms of organic nature, does not necessarily spring from faithlessness, nor the deducing a moral out of them from an irregular and languid conscientiousness. In this, as in almost all things connected with moral discipline, the same results may follow from contrary causes; and as there are a good and evil contentment, a good and evil discontent, a good and evil care, fear, ambition, and so on, there are also good and evil forms of this sympathy with nature, and disposition to moralize over it. In general, active men, of strong sense and stern principle, do not care to see anything in a leaf, but vegetable tissue, and are so well convinced of useful moral truth, that it does not strike them as a

new or notable thing when they find it in any way symbolized by material nature; hence there is a strong presumption, when first we perceive a tendency in any one to regard trees as living, and enunciate moral aphorisms over every pebble they stumble against, that such tendency proceeds from a morbid temperament, like Shelley's, or an inconstant one, like Jaques's. But when the active life is nobly fulfilled, and the mind is then raised beyond it into clear and calm beholding of the world around us, the same tendency again manifests itself in the most sacred way: the simplest forms of nature are strangely animated by the sense of the Divine presence; the trees and flowers seem all, in a sort, children of God; and we ourselves, their fellows, made out of the same dust, and greater than they only in having a greater portion of the Divine power exerted on our frame, and all the common uses and palpably visible forms of things, become subordinate in our minds to their inner glory,—to the mysterious voices in which they talk to us about God, and the changeful and typical aspects by which they witness to us of holy truth, and fill us with obedient, joyful, and thankful emotion.

It is in raising us from the first state of inactive reverie to the second of useful thought, that scientific pursuits are to be chiefly praised. But in restraining us at this second stage, and checking the impulses towards higher contemplation, they are to be feared or blamed. They may in certain minds be consistent with such contemplation; but only by an effort: in their nature they are always adverse to it, having a tendency to chill and subdue the feelings, and to resolve all things into atoms and numbers. For most men, an ignorant enjoyment is better than an informed one; it is better to conceive the sky as a blue dome than a dark cavity, and the cloud as a golden throne than a sleety mist. I much question whether any one who knows optics, however religious he may be, can

feel in equal degree the pleasure or reverence which an unlettered peasant may feel at the sight of a rainbow. And it is mercifully thus ordained, since the law of life, for a finite being, with respect to the works of an infinite one, must be always an infinite ignorance. We cannot fathom the mystery of a single flower, nor is it intended that we should; but that the pursuit of science should constantly be stayed by the love of beauty, and accuracy of knowledge by tenderness of emotion.

Nor is it even just to speak of the love of beauty as in all respects unscientific; for there is a science of the aspects of things as well as of their nature; and it is as much a fact to be noted in their constitution, that they produce such and such an effect upon the eye or heart (as, for instance, that minor scales of sound cause melancholy), as that they are made up of certain atoms or vibrations of matter.

We are too much in the habit of looking at falsehood in its darkest associations, and through the color of its worst purposes. That indignation which we profess to feel at deceit absolute, is indeed only at deceit malicious. We resent calumny, hypocrisy, and treachery, because they harm us, not because they are untrue. Take the detraction and the mischief from the untruth, and we are little offended by it; turn it into praise, and we may be pleased with it. And yet it is not calumny nor treachery that does the most harm in the world; they are continually crushed, and are felt only in being conquered. But it is the glistening and softly spoken lie; the amiable fallacy; the patriotic lie of the historian, the provident lie of the politician, the zealous lie of the partizan, the merciful lie of the friend, and the careless lie of each man to himself, that cast that black mystery over humanity, through which any man who pierces, we thank as we would thank any one who dug a well in a desert; happy in that the thirst for

truth still remains with us, even when we have wilfully left the fountains of it.

It would be well if moralists less frequently confused the greatness of a sin with its unpardonableness. The two characters are altogether distinct. The greatness of a fault depends partly on the nature of the person against whom it is committed, partly upon the extent of its consequences. Its pardonableness depends, *humanly speaking*, on the degree of temptation to it. One class of circumstances determines the weight of the attaching punishment, the other, the claim to the remission of punishment; and since it is not easy for men to estimate the relative weight, nor possible for them to know the relative consequences of crime, it is usually wise in them to quit the care of such wise adjustments, and to look on the other and clearer condition of culpability, esteeming those faults greatest which are committed under least temptation. I do not mean to diminish the blame of the injurious and malicious sin, of the selfish and deliberate falsity; yet it seems to me that the shortest way to check the darker forms of deceit is to set more scrupulous watch against those which have mingled, unregarded and unchastised, with the current of our life. Do not let us lie at all. Do not think of one falsity as harmless, and another as slight, and another as unintended. Cast them all aside; they may be light and accidental, but they are an ugly soot from the smoke of the pit, for all that; and it is better that our hearts should be kept clear of them, without over-care as to which is the largest or blackest. Speaking truth is like writing fair, and comes only by practice; it is less a matter of will than of habit; and I doubt if any occasion can be trivial which permits the practice and formation of such a habit. To speak and act truth with constancy and precision is nearly as difficult, and perhaps as meritorious, as to speak it under intimidation or penalty;

and it is a strange thought how many men there are, as I trust, who would hold it at the cost of fortune or life, for one who could hold it at the cost of a little daily trouble.

And seeing that of all sin there is, perhaps, no one more flatly opposite to the Almighty, no one more "wanting the good of virtue and of being," than this of lying, it is surely a strange insolence to fall into the foulness of it on light or no temptation, and surely becoming an honorable man to resolve that, whatever fallacies the necessary course of his life may compel him to bear or to believe, none shall disturb the serenity of his voluntary actions, nor diminish the reality of his chosen delights.

On the whole, these are much *sadder* ages than the early ones; not sadder in a noble and deep way, but in a dim, wearied way,—the way of ennui, and jaded intellect, and uncomfortableness of soul and body. The Middle Ages had their wars and agonies, but also intense delights. Their gold was dashed with blood; but ours is sprinkled with dust. Their life was interwoven with white and purple; ours is one seamless stuff of brown. Not that we are without apparent festivity, but festivity more or less forced, mistaken, embittered, incomplete—not of the heart. How wonderfully, since Shakspere's time, have we lost the power of laughing at bad jests! The very finish of our wit belies our gaiety.

The profoundest reason of this darkness of heart is, I believe, our want of faith. There never yet was a generation of men (savage or civilized) who, taken as a body, so wofully fulfilled the words, "having no hope, and without God in the world," as the present civilized European race. A Red Indian or Otaheitan savage has more sense of a Divine existence round him, or government over him, than the plurality of refined Londoners and Parisians; and those among us who may in

some sense be said to believe, are divided almost without exception into two broad classes, Romanist and Puritan; who, but for the interference of the unbelieving portions of society, would, either of them, reduce the other sect as speedily as possible to ashes; the Romanist having always done so whenever he could, from the beginning of their separation, and the Puritan at this time holding himself in complacent expectation of the destruction of Rome by volcanic fire. Such division as this between persons nominally of one religion, that is to say, believing in the same God, and the same Revelation, cannot but become a stumbling-block of the gravest kind to all thoughtful and far-sighted men,—a stumbling-block which they can only surmount under the most favorable circumstances of early education. Hence, nearly all our powerful men in this age of the world are unbelievers; the best of them in doubt and misery; the worst in reckless defiance; the plurality in plodding hesitation, doing, as well as they can, what practical work lies ready to their hands. Most of our scientific men are in this last class; our popular authors either set themselves definitely against all religious form, pleading for simply truth and benevolence (Thackeray, Dickens), or give themselves up to bitter and fruitless statement of facts (De Balzac), or surface-painting (Scott), or careless blasphemy, sad or smiling (Byron, Beranger). Our earnest poets, and deepest thinkers, are doubtful and indignant (Tennyson, Carlyle); one or two, anchored, indeed, but anxious, or weeping (Wordsworth, Mrs. Browning); and of these two, the first is not so sure of his anchor, but that now and then it drags with him, even to make him cry out,—

> "Great God, I had rather be
> A Pagan suckled in some creed outworn:
> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn."

The absence of care for personal beauty, which is another great characteristic of the age, adds to this feeling in a twofold way: first, by turning all reverent thoughts away from human nature; and making us think of men as ridiculous or ugly creatures, getting through the world as well as they can, and spoiling it in doing so; not ruling it in a kingly way and crowning all its loveliness. In the Middle Ages hardly anything but vice could be caricatured, because virtue was always visibly and personally noble; now virtue itself is apt to inhabit such poor human bodies, that no aspect of it is invulnerable to jest; and for all fairness we have to seek to the flowers, for all sublimity, to the hills.

The same want of care operates, in another way, by lowering the standard of health, increasing the susceptibility to nervous or sentimental impressions, and thus adding to the other powers of nature over us whatever charm may be felt in her fostering the melancholy fancies of brooding idleness.

*That* is to everything created, pre-eminently useful, which enables it rightly and fully to perform the functions appointed to it by its Creator. Therefore, that we may determine what is chiefly useful to man, it is necessary first to determine the use of man himself.

Man's use and function is to be the witness of the glory of God, and to advance that glory by his reasonable obedience and resultant happiness.

Whatever enables us to fulfil this function, is in the pure and first sense of the word useful to us; pre-eminently, therefore, whatever sets the glory of God more brightly before us. But things that only help us to exist, are in a secondary and mean sense, useful, or rather, if they be looked for alone, they are useless and worse; for it would be better that we should not exist, than that we should guiltily disappoint the purposes of existence.

And yet people speak in this working age, when they speak from their hearts, as if houses, and lands, and food, and raiment were alone useful, and as if sight, thought, and admiration, were all profitless, so that men insolently call themselves Utilitarians, who would turn, if they had their way, themselves and their race into vegetables; men who think, as far as such can be said to think, that the meat is more than the life, and the raiment than the body, who look to the earth as a stable, and to its fruit as fodder; vinedressers and husbandmen, who love the corn they grind, and the grapes they crush, better than the gardens of the angels upon the slopes of Eden; hewers of wood and drawers of water, who think that the wood they hew and the water they draw, are better than the pine forests that cover the mountains like the shadow of God, and than the great rivers that move like eternity.

It seems to me that much of what is great, and to all men beneficial, has been wrought by those who neither intended nor knew the good they did, and that many mighty harmonies have been discoursed by instruments that had been dumb or discordant, but that God knew their stops. The Spirit of Prophecy consisted with the avarice of Balaam, and the disobedience of Saul. Could we spare from its page that parable, which he said, who saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open, though we know that the sword of his punishment was then sharp in its sheath beneath him in the plains of Moab? or shall we not lament with David over the shield cast away on the Gilboa mountains, of him to whom God gave *another heart* that day, when he turned his back to go from Samuel? It is not our part to look hardly, nor to look always, to the character or the deeds of men, but to accept from all of them, and to hold fast that which we can prove good, and feel to be ordained for us.

It is not possible for a Christian man to walk across so much as a rood of the natural earth, with mind unagitated and rightly poised, without receiving strength and hope from some stone, flower, leaf, or sound, nor without a sense of a dew falling upon him out of the sky; though, I say, this falsity is not wholly and in terms admitted, yet it seems to be partly and practically so in much of the doing and teaching even of holy men, who in the recommending of the love of God to us, refer but seldom to those things in which it is most abundantly and immediately shown; though they insist much on his giving of bread, and raiment, and health, (which he gives to all inferior creatures,) they require us not to thank him for that glory of his works which he has permitted us alone to perceive: they tell us often to meditate in the closet, but they send us not, like Isaac, into the fields at even; they dwell on the duty of self-denial, but they exhibit not the duty of delight. Now there are reasons for this, manifold in the toil and warfare of an earnest mind, which, in its efforts at the raising of men from utter loss and misery, has often but little time or disposition to take heed of anything more than the bare life, and of those so occupied it is not for us to judge; but I think, that, of the weaknesses, distresses, vanities, schisms, and sins, which often even in the holiest men, diminish their usefulness, and mar their happiness, there would be fewer, if in their struggle with nature fallen, they sought for more aid from nature undestroyed. It seems to me that the real sources of bluntness in the feelings towards the splendor of the grass and glory of the flower, are less to be found in ardor of occupation, in seriousness of compassion, or heavenliness of desire, than in the turning of the eye at intervals of rest too selfishly within; the want of power to shake off the anxieties of actual and near interest, and to leave results in God's hands; the scorn of all that does not seem immediately

apt for our purposes, or open to our understanding, and perhaps something of pride, which desires rather to investigate than to feel. I believe that the root of almost every schism and heresy from which the Christian church has ever suffered, has been the effort of men to earn, rather than to receive, their salvation.

Deep though the causes of thankfulness must be to every people at peace with others and at unity with itself, there are causes of fear also, a fear greater than of sword and sedition; that dependence on God may be forgotten because the bread is given and the water is sure; that gratitude to Him may cease because his constancy of protection has taken the semblance of a natural law; that heavenly hope may grow faint amid the full fruition of the world; that selfishness may take place of undemanded devotion, compassion be lost in vain-glory, and love in dissimulation; that enervation may succeed to strength, apathy to patience, and noise of jesting words and foulness of dark thoughts to the earnest purity of the girded loins and the burning lamp. About the river of human life there is a wintry wind, though a heavenly sunshine; the iris colors its agitation; the frost fixes upon its repose! Let us beware that our rest become not the rest of stones, which so long as they are torrent-tossed and thunder-stricken, maintain their majesty, but when the stream is silent, and the storm passed, suffer the grass to cover them and the lichen to feed on them, and are ploughed down into dust.

There is no action so slight, nor so mean, but it may be done to a great purpose, and ennobled therefor; nor is any purpose so great but that slight actions may help it, and may be so done as to help it much, most especially that chief of all purposes, the pleasing of God. Hence George Herbert—

"A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine."

We treat God with irreverence by banishing Him from our thoughts, not by referring to his will on slight occasions. His is not the finite authority or intelligence which cannot be troubled with small things. There is nothing so small but that we may honor God by asking His guidance of it, or insult Him by taking it into our own hands; and what is true of the Deity is equally true of His Revelation. We use it most reverently when most habitually; our insolence is in ever acting without reference to it; our true honoring of it is in its universal application.

There is not any part of our feeling or nature, nor can there be through eternity, which shall not be in some way influenced and affected by the fall, and that not in any way of degradation, for the renewing in the divinity of Christ is a nobler condition than ever that of Paradise, and yet throughout eternity it must imply and refer to the disobedience, and the corrupt state of sin and death, and the suffering of Christ himself, which can we conceive of any redeemed soul as for an instant forgetting, or as remembering without sorrow? Neither are the alternations of joy and such sorrow as by us is inconceivable, being only as it were a softness and silence in the pulse of an infinite felicity, inconsistent with the state even of the unfallen, for the angels who rejoice over repentance cannot but feel an uncomprehended pain as they try and try again in vain, whether they may not warm hard hearts with the brooding of their kind wings.

God appoints to every one of his creatures a separate mis-

sion, and if they discharge it honorably, if they quit themselves like men, and faithfully follow that light which is in them, withdrawing from it all cold and quenchless influence, there will assuredly come of it such burning as, according to its appointed mode and measure, shall shine before men, and be of service constant and holy. Degrees infinite of lustre there must always be, but the weakest among us has a gift, however seemingly trivial, which is peculiar to him, and which, worthily used, will be a gift also to his race for ever.—"Fool not," says George Herbert,

> "For all may have,
> If they dare choose, a glorious life or grave."

Let us not forget, that if honor be for the dead, gratitude can only be for the living. He who has once stood beside the grave, to look back upon the companionship which has been for ever closed, feeling how impotent *there* are the wild love, or the keen sorrow, to give one instant's pleasure to the pulseless heart, or atone in the lowest measure to the departed spirit for the hour of unkindness, will scarcely, for the future, incur that debt to the heart, which can only be discharged to the dust. But the lesson which men receive as individuals, they do not learn as nations. Again and again they have seen their noblest descend into the grave, and have thought it enough to garland the tombstone when they had not crowned the brow, and to pay the honor to the ashes, which they had denied to the spirit. Let it not displease them that they are bidden, amid the tumult and the dazzle of their busy life, to listen to the few voices, and watch for the few lamps, which God has toned and lighted to charm and to guide them, that they may not learn their sweetness by their silence, nor their light by their decay.

Aristotle has subtly noted that "we call not men intemperate so much with respect to the scents of roses or herb-perfumes as of ointments and of condiments." For the fact is, that of scents artificially prepared the extreme desire is intemperance, but of natural and God-given scents, which take their part in the harmony and pleasantness of creation, there can hardly be intemperance; not that there is any absolute difference between the two kinds, but that these are likely to be received with gratitude and joyfulness rather than those, so that we despise the seeking of essences and unguents, but not the sowing of violets along our garden banks. But all things may be elevated by affection, as the spikenard of Mary, and in the Song of Solomon, the myrrh upon the handles of the lock, and that of Isaac concerning his son. And the general law for all these pleasures is, that when sought in the abstract and ardently, they are foul things, but when received with thankfulness and with reference to God's glory, they become theoretic (the exulting, reverent, and grateful perception of pleasantness, I call *theoria*); and so I can find something divine in the sweetness of wild fruits, as well as in the pleasantness of the pure air, and the tenderness of its natural perfumes that come and go as they list.

The pleasures of sight and hearing are given as *gifts*. They answer not any purposes of mere existence, for the distinction of all that is useful or dangerous to us might be made, and often is made, by the eye, without its receiving the slightest pleasure of sight. We might have learned to distinguish fruits and grain from flowers, without having any superior pleasure in the aspect of the latter. And the ear might have learned to distinguish the sounds that communicate ideas, or to recognize intimations of elemental danger, without perceiving either music in the voice, or majesty in the thunder. And as these pleasures have no function to perform, so there is no limit to

their continuance in the accomplishment of their end, for *they are an end in themselves*, and so may be perpetual with all of us—being in no way destructive, but rather increasing in exquisiteness by repetition.

In whatever is an object of life, in whatever may be infinitely and for itself desired, we may be sure there is something of divine, for God will not make anything an object of life to his creatures which does not point to, or partake of, Himself.

I believe one of the worst symptoms of modern society to be, its notion of great inferiority, and ungentlemanliness, as necessarily belonging to the character of a tradesman. I believe tradesmen may be, ought to be—often are, more gentlemen than idle and useless people: and I believe that art may do noble work by recording in the hall of each trade, the services which men belonging to that trade have done for their country, both preserving the portraits, and recording the important incidents in the lives, of those who have made great advances in commerce and civilization. We are stewards or ministers of whatever talents are entrusted to us. Is it not a strange thing, that while we more or less accept the meaning of that saying, so long as it is considered metaphorical, we never accept its meaning in its own terms? You know the lesson is given us under the form of a story about money. Money was given to the servants to make use of: the unprofitable servant dug in the earth, and hid his Lord's money. Well, we, in our poetical and spiritual application of this, say, that of course money doesn't mean money, it means wit, it means intellect, it means influence in high quarters, it means everything in the world except itself. And do not you see what a pretty and pleasant come-off there is for most of us, in this spiritual application? Of course, if we had wit, we would

use it for the good of our fellow-creatures. But we haven't wit. Of course, if we had influence with the bishops, we would use it for the good of the Church; but we haven't any influence with the bishops. Of course, if we had political power, we would use it for the good of the nation; but we have no political power; we have no talents entrusted to *us* of any sort or kind. It is true we have a little money, but the parable can't possibly mean anything so vulgar as money; our money's our own.

I believe, if you think seriously of this matter, you will feel that the first and most literal application is just as necessary a one as any other—that the story does very specially mean what it says—plain money; and that the reason we don't at once believe it does so, is a sort of tacit idea that while thought, wit, and intellect, and all power of birth and position, are indeed *given* to us, and, therefore, to be laid out for the Giver,—our wealth has not been given to us; but we have worked for it, and have a right to spend it as we choose. I think you will find that is the real substance of our understanding in this matter. Beauty, we say, is given by God—it is a talent; strength is given by God—it is a talent; position is given by God—it is a talent; but money is proper wages for our day's work—it is not a talent, it is a due. We may justly spend it on ourselves, if we have worked for it.

And there would be some shadow of excuse for this, were it not that the very power of making the money is itself only one of the applications of that intellect or strength which we confess to be talents. Why is one man richer than another? Because he is more industrious, more persevering, and more sagacious. Well, who made him more persevering and more sagacious than others? That power of endurance, that quickness of apprehension, that calmness of judgment, which enable him to seize the opportunities that others lose, and per-

sist in the lines of conduct in which others fail—are these not talent?—are they not in the present state of the world, among the most distinguished and influential of mental gifts? And is it not wonderful, that while we should be utterly ashamed to use a superiority of body, in order to thrust our weaker companions aside from some place of advantage, we unhesitatingly use our superiorities of mind to thrust them back from whatever good that strength of mind can attain. You would be indignant if you saw a strong man walk into a theatre or a lecture-room, and calmly choosing the best place, take his feeble neighbor by the shoulder, and turn him out of it into the back seats, or the street. You would be equally indignant if you saw a stout fellow thrust himself up to a table where some hungry children were being fed, and reach his arm over their heads and take their bread from them. But you are not the least indignant if when a man has stoutness of thought and swiftness of capacity, and, instead of being long-armed only, has the much greater gift of being long-headed—you think it perfectly just that he should use his intellect to take the bread out of the mouths of all the other men in the town who are of the same trade with him; or use his breadth and sweep of sight to gather some branch of the commerce of the country into one great cobweb, of which he is himself to be the central spider, making every thread vibrate with the points of his claws, and commanding every avenue with the facets of his eyes. You see no injustice in this.

But there is injustice; and, let us trust, one of which honorable men will at no very distant period disdain to be guilty. In some degree, however, it is indeed not unjust; in some degree it is necessary and intended. It is assuredly just that idleness should be surpassed by energy; that the widest influence should be possessed by those who are best able to wield it; and that a wise man, at the end of his career, should

be better off than a fool. But for that reason, is the fool to be wretched, utterly crushed down, and left in all the suffering which his conduct and capacity naturally inflict?—Not so. What do you suppose fools were made for? That you might tread upon them, and starve them, and get the better of them in every possible way? By no means. They were made that wise people might take care of them. That is the true and plain fact concerning the relations of every strong and wise man to the world about him. He has his strength given him, not that he may crush the weak, but that he may support and guide them. In his own household he is to be the guide and the support of his children; out of his household he is still to be the father, that is, the guide and support of the weak and the poor; not merely of the meritoriously weak and the innocently poor, but of the guiltily and punishably poor; of the men who ought to have known better—of the poor who ought to be ashamed of themselves. It is nothing to give pension and cottage to the widow who has lost her son; it is nothing to give food and medicine to the workman who has broken his arm, or the decrepit woman wasting in sickness. But it is something to use your time and strength to war with the waywardness and thoughtlessness of mankind; to keep the erring workman in your service till you have made him an unerring one; and to direct your fellow-merchant to the opportunity which his dulness would have lost. This is much; but it is yet more, when you have fully achieved the superiority which is due to you, and acquired the wealth which is the fitting reward of your sagacity, if you solemnly accept the responsibility of it, as it is the helm and guide of labor far and near. For you who have it in your hands, are in reality the pilots of the power and effort of the State. It is entrusted to you as an authority to be used for good or evil, just as completely as kingly authority was ever given to a

prince, or military command to a captain. And, according to the quantity of it that you have in your hands, you are the arbiters of the will and work of England; and the whole issue, whether the work of the State shall suffice for the State or not, depends upon you. You may stretch out your sceptre over the heads of the English laborers, and say to them, as they stoop to its waving, "Subdue this obstacle that has baffled our fathers, put away this plague that consumes our children; water these dry places, plough these desert ones, carry this food to those who are in hunger; carry this light to those who are in darkness; carry this life to those who are in death;" or on the other side you may say to her laborers: "Here am I; this power is in my hand; come, build a mound here for me to be throned upon, high and wide; come, make crowns for my head, that men may see them shine from far away; come, weave tapestries for my feet, that I may tread softly on the silk and purple; come, dance before me, that I may be gay; and sing sweetly to me, that I may slumber; so shall I live in joy and die in honor." And better than such an honorable death, it were that the day had perished wherein we were born, and the night in which it was said there is a child conceived.

I trust that in a little while, there will be few of our rich men who, through carelessness or covetousness, thus forfeit the glorious office which is intended for their hands. I said, just now, that wealth ill-used was as the net of the spider, entangling and destroying: but wealth well used, is as the net of the sacred fisher who gathers souls of men out of the deep. A time will come—I do not think even now it is far from us—when this golden net of the world's wealth will be spread abroad as the flaming meshes of morning cloud are over the sky; bearing with them the joy of light and the dew of the morning, as well as the summons to honorable and peaceful

toil. What less can we hope from your wealth than this, rich men of England, when once you feel fully how, by the strength of your possessions—not, observe, by the exhaustion, but by the administration of them and the power—you can direct the acts,—command the energies—inform the ignorance,—prolong the existence, of the whole human race; and how, even of worldly wisdom, which man employs faithfully, it is true, not only that her ways are pleasantness, but that her paths are peace; and that, for all the children of men, as well as for those to whom she is given, Length of days are in her right hand, as in her left hand Riches and Honor?

We are too much in the habit of considering happy accidents as what are called "special Providences;" and thinking that when any great work needs to be done, the man who is to do it will certainly be pointed out by Providence, be he shepherd or sea-boy; and prepared for his work by all kinds of minor providences, in the best possible way. Whereas all the analogies of God's operations in other matters prove the contrary of this; we find that "of thousand seeds, He often brings but one to bear," often not one; and the one seed which He appoints to bear is allowed to bear crude or perfect fruit according to the dealings of the husbandman with it. And there cannot be a doubt in the mind of any person accustomed to take broad and logical views of the world's history, that its events are ruled by Providence in precisely the same manner as its harvests; that the seeds of good and evil are broadcast among men, just as the seeds of thistles and fruits are; and that according to the force of our industry, and wisdom of our husbandry, the ground will bring forth to us figs or thistles. So that when it seems needed that a certain work should be done for the world, and no man is there to do

it, we have no right to say that God did not wish it to be done; and therefore sent no man able to do it. The probability (if I wrote my own convictions, I should say certainty) is, that He sent many men, hundreds of men, able to do it; and that we have rejected them, or crushed them; by our previous folly of conduct or of institution, we have rendered it impossible to distinguish, or impossible to reach them; and when the need for them comes, and we suffer for the want of them, it is not that God refuses to send us deliverers, and specially appoints all our consequent sufferings; but that He has sent, and we have refused, the deliverers; and the pain is then wrought out by His eternal law, as surely as famine is wrought out by eternal law for a nation which will neither plough nor sow. No less are we in error in supposing, as we so frequently do, that if a man be found, he is sure to be in all respects fitted for the work to be done, as the key is to the lock; and that every accident which happened in the forging him, only adapted him more truly to the wards. It is pitiful to hear historians beguiling themselves and their readers, by tracing in the early history of great men, the minor circumstances which fitted them for the work they did, without ever taking notice of the other circumstances which as assuredly unfitted them for it; so concluding that miraculous interposition prepared them in all points for everything, and that they did all that could have been desired or hoped for from them: whereas the certainty of the matter is that, throughout their lives, they were thwarted and corrupted by some things as certainly as they were helped and disciplined by others; and that, in the kindliest and most reverent view which can justly be taken of them, they were but poor mistaken creatures, struggling with a world more profoundly mistaken than they;—assuredly sinned against, or sinning in thousands of ways, and bringing out at last a maimed result—not what they might or ought to have done, but all that could be done

against the world's resistance, and in spite of their own sorrowful falsehood to themselves.

And this being so, it is the practical duty of a wise nation, first to withdraw, as far as may be, its youth from destructive influences;—then to try its material as far as possible, and to lose the use of none that is good. I do not mean by "withdrawing from destructive influences" the keeping of youths out of trials; but the keeping them out of the way of things purely and absolutely mischievous. I do not mean that we should shade our green corn in all heat, and shelter it in all frost, but only that we should dyke out the inundation from it, and drive the fowls away from it. Let your youth labor and suffer; but do not let it starve, nor steal, nor blaspheme.

Examine well the channels of your admiration, and you will find that they are, in verity, as unchangeable as the channels of your heart's blood; that just as by the pressure of a bandage, or by perpetual and unwholesome action of some part of the body, that blood may be wasted or arrested, and in its stagnancy cease to nourish the frame, or in its disturbed flow affect it with incurable disease, so also admiration itself may, by the bandages of fashion, bound close over the eyes and the arteries of the soul, be arrested in its natural pulse and healthy flow; but that whenever the artificial pressure is removed, it will return into that bed which has been traced for it by the finger of God.

Custom has no real influence upon our feelings of the beautiful, except in dulling and checking them. You see the broad blue sky every day over your heads; but you do not for that reason determine blue to be more or less beautiful than you did at first; you are unaccustomed to see stones as blue as the sapphire, but you do not for that reason think the sapphire less beautiful than other stones. The blue color is everlastingly appointed by the Deity to be a source of delight.

Let us think for a few moments what romance and Utopianism mean.

First, romance. In consequence of the many absurd fictions which long formed the elements of romance writing, the word romance is sometimes taken as synonymous with falsehood. Thus the French talk of *Des Romans*, and thus the English use the word Romancing.

But in this sense we had much better use the word falsehood at once. It is far plainer and clearer. And if in this sense I put anything romantic before you, pray pay no attention to it, or to me.

In the second place. Because young people are particularly apt to indulge in reverie, and imaginative pleasures, and to neglect their plain and practical duties, the word *romantic* has come to signify weak, foolish, speculative, unpractical, unprincipled. In all these cases it would be much better to say weak, foolish, unpractical, unprincipled. The words are clearer. If in this sense, also, I put anything romantic before you, pray pay no attention to me.

The real and proper use of the word *romantic* is simply to characterise an improbable or unaccustomed degree of beauty, sublimity, or virtue. For instance, in matters of history, is not the Retreat of the Ten Thousand romantic? Is not the death of Leonidas? of the Horatii? On the other hand, you find nothing romantic, though much that is monstrous, in the excesses of Tiberius or Commodus. So again, the battle of Agincourt is romantic, and of Bannockburn, simply because there was an extraordinary display of human virtue in both those battles. But there is no romance in the battles of the last Italian campaign, in which mere feebleness and distrust were on one side, mere physical force on the other. And even in fiction, the opponents of virtue, in order to be romantic, must have sublimity mingled with their vice. It is not the

knave, not the ruffian, that are romantic, but the giant and the dragon; and these, not because they are false, but because they are majestic. So again as to beauty. You feel that armor is romantic because it is a beautiful dress, and you are not used to it. You do not feel there is anything romantic in the paint and shells of a Sandwich Islander, for these are not beautiful.

So, then, observe, this feeling which you are accustomed to despise—this secret and poetical enthusiasm in all your hearts, which, as practical men, you try to restrain—is indeed one of the holiest parts of your being. It is the instinctive delight in, and admiration for, sublimity, beauty, and virtue, unusually manifested. And so far from being a dangerous guide, it is the truest part of your being. It is even truer than your consciences. A man's conscience may be utterly perverted and led astray; but so long as the feelings of romance endure within us, they are unerring—they are as true to what is right and lovely as the needle to the north; and all that you have to do is to add to the enthusiastic sentiment, the majestic judgment—to mingle prudence and foresight with imagination and admiration, and you have the perfect human soul. But the great evil of these days is that we try to destroy the romantic feeling, instead of bridling and directing it. Mark what Young says of the men of the world:

> "They, who think nought so strong of the romance,
> So rank knight-errant, as a real friend."

And they are right. True friendship is romantic, to the men of the world—true affection is romantic—true religion is romantic; and if you were to ask me who of all powerful and popular writers in the cause of error had wrought most harm to their race, I should hesitate in reply whether to name

Voltaire or Byron, or the last most ingenious and most venom ous of the degraded philosophers of Germany, or rather Cervantes, for he cast scorn upon the holiest principles of humanity—he, of all men, most helped forward the terrible change in the soldiers of Europe, from the spirit of Bayard to the spirit of Bonaparte,* helped to change loyalty into license, protection into plunder, truth into treachery, chivalry into selfishness; and since his time, the purest impulses and the noblest purposes have perhaps been oftener stayed by the devil, under the name of Quixotism, than under any other base name or false allegation.

Quixotism, or Utopianism: that is another of the devil's pet words. I believe the quiet admission which we are all of us so ready to make, that, because things have long been wrong, it is impossible they should ever be right, is one of the most fatal sources of misery and crime from which this world suffers. Whenever you hear a man dissuading you from attempting to do well, on the ground that perfection is "Utopian," beware of that man. Cast the word out of your dictionary altogether. There is no need for it. Things are either possible or impossible—you can easily determine which, in any given state of human science. If the thing is impossible, you need not trouble yourselves about it; if possible, try for it. It is very Utopian to hope for the entire doing away with drunkenness and misery out of the Canongate; but the Utopianism is not our business—the *work* is. It is Utopian to hope to give every child in this kingdom the knowledge of God from its youth; but the Utopianism is not our business—the *work* is.

*I mean no scandal against the *present* emperor of the French, whose truth has, I believe, been as conspicuous in the late political negotiations, as his decision and prudence have been throughout the whole course of his government

You know how often it is difficult to be wisely charitable, to do good without multiplying the sources of evil. You know that to give alms is nothing unless you give thought also; and that therefore it is written, not "blessed is he that *feedeth* the poor," but, "blessed is he that *considereth* the poor." And you know that a little thought and a little kindness are often worth more than a great deal of money.

Now this charity of thought is not merely to be exercised towards the poor; it is to be exercised towards all men. There is assuredly no action of our social life, however unimportant, which, by kindly thought, may not be made to have a beneficial influence upon others; and it is impossible to spend the smallest sum of money, for any not absolutely necessary purpose, without a grave responsibility attaching to the manner of spending it. The object we ourselves covet may, indeed, be desirable and harmless, so far as we are concerned, but the providing us with it may, perhaps, be a very prejudicial occupation to some one else. And then it becomes instantly a moral question, whether we are to indulge ourselves or not. Whatever we wish to buy, we ought first to consider not only if the thing be fit for us, but if the manufacture of it be a wholesome and happy one; and if, on the whole, the sum we are going to spend will do as much good spent in this way as it would if spent in any other way. It may be said that we have not time to consider all this before we make a purchase. But no time could be spent in a more important duty; and God never imposes a duty without giving the time to do it. Let us, however, only acknowledge the principle;—once make up your mind to allow the consideration of the *effect* of your purchases to regulate the *kind* of your purchase, and you will soon easily find grounds enough to decide upon. The plea of ignorance will never take away our responsibilities. It is written, "If thou sayest, Behold we knew it not; doth not he

that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it?"

There is another branch of decorative art in which I am sorry to say we cannot, at least under existing circumstances, indulge ourselves, with the hope of doing good to anybody, I mean the great and subtle art of dress.

And here I must interrupt the pursuit of our subject for a moment or two, in order to state one of the principles of political economy, which, though it is, I believe, now sufficiently understood and asserted by the leading masters of the science, is not yet, I grieve to say, acted upon by the plurality of those who have the management of riches. Whenever we spend money, we of course set people to work: that is the meaning of spending money; we may, indeed, lose it without employing anybody; but, whenever we spend it, we set a number of people to work, greater or less, of course, according to the rate of wages, but in the long run, proportioned to the sum we spend. Well, your shallow people, because they see that however they spend money they are always employing somebody, and, therefore, doing some good, think and say to themselves, that it is all one *how* they spend it—that all their apparently selfish luxury is, in reality, unselfish, and is doing just as much good as if they gave all their money away, or perhaps more good; and I have heard foolish people even declare it is a principle of political economy, that whoever invented a new want conferred a good on the community. I have not words strong enough—at least I could not, without shocking you, use the words which would be strong enough—to express my estimate of the absurdity and the mischievousness of this popular fallacy. So putting a great restraint upon myself, and using no hard words, I will simply try to state the nature of it, and the extent of its influence.

Granted, that whenever we spend money for whatever

purpose, we set people to work; and passing by, for the moment, the question whether the work we set them to is all equally healthy and good for them, we will assume that whenever we spend a guinea we provide an equal number of people with healthy maintenance for a given time. But, by the way in which we spend it, we entirely direct the labor of those people during that given time. We become their masters or mistresses, and we compel them to produce, within a certain period, a certain article. Now, that article may be a useful and lasting one, or it may be a useless and perishable one—it may be one useful to the whole community, or useful only to ourselves. And our selfishness and folly, or our virtue and prudence, are shown, not by our spending money, but by our spending it for the wrong or right thing, and we are wise and kind, not in maintaining a certain number of people for a given period, but only in requiring them to produce, during that period, the kind of things which shall be useful to society, instead of those which are only useful to ourselves.

Thus, for instance: if you are a young lady, and employ a certain number of sempstresses for a given time, in making a given number of simple and serviceable dresses, suppose, seven; of which you can wear one yourself for half the winter, and give six away to poor girls who have none, you are spending your money unselfishly. But if you employ the same number of sempstresses for the same number of days, in making four, or five, or six beautiful flounces for your own ball-dress—flounces which will clothe no one but yourself, and which you will yourself be unable to wear at more than one ball—you are employing your money selfishly. You have maintained, indeed, in each case the same number of people; but in the one case you have directed their labor to the service of the community; in the other case you have consumed it wholly upon yourself

I don't say you are never to do so; I don't say you ought not sometimes to think of yourselves only, and to make yourselves as pretty as you can; only do not confuse coquettishness with benevolence, nor cheat yourselves into thinking that all the finery you can wear is so much put into the hungry mouths of those beneath you: it is not so; it is what you yourselves, whether you will or no, must sometimes instinctively feel it to be—it is what those who stand shivering in the streets, forming a line to watch you as you step out of your carriages, *know* it to be; those fine dresses do not mean that so much has been put into their mouths, but that so much has been taken out of their mouths. The real politico-economical signification of every one of those beautiful toilettes, is just this; that you have had a certain number of people put for a certain number of days wholly under your authority, by the sternest of slave-masters,—hunger and cold; and you have said to them, "I will feed you, indeed, and clothe you, and give you fuel for so many days; but during those days you shall work for me only: your little brothers need clothes, but you shall make none for them: your sick friend needs clothes, but you shall make none for her: you yourself will soon need another, and a warmer dress; but you shall make none for yourself. You shall make nothing but lace and roses for me; for this fortnight to come, you shall work at the patterns and petals, and then I will crush and consume them away in an hour." You will perhaps answer—"It may not be particularly benevolent to do this, and we won't call it so; but at any rate we do no wrong in taking their labor when we pay them their wages: if we pay for their work we have a right to it." No;—a thousand times no. The labor which you have paid for, does indeed become, by the act of purchase, your own labor: you have bought the hands and the time of those workers; they are, by right and justice, your own hands, your own time. But have you a right to spend

your own time, to work with your own hands, only for your own advantage?—much more, when, by purchase, you have invested your own person with the strength of others; and added to your own life, a part of the life of others? You may, indeed, to a certain extent, use their labor for your delight; remember, I am making no general assertions against splendor of dress, or pomp of accessaries of life; on the contrary, there are many reasons for thinking that we do not at present attach enough importance to beautiful dress, as one of the means of influencing general taste and character. But I *do* say, that you must weigh the value of what you ask these workers to produce for you in its own distinct balance; that on its own worthiness or desirableness rests the question of your kindness, and not merely on the fact of your having employed people in producing it: and I say farther, that as long as there are cold and nakedness in the land around you, so long there can be no question at all but that splendor of dress is a crime. In due time, when we have nothing better to set people to work at, it may be right to let them make lace and cut jewels; but, as long as there are any who have no blankets for their beds, and no rags for their bodies, so long it is blanket-making and tailoring we must set people to work at—not lace.

And it would be strange, if at any great assembly which, while it dazzled the young and the thoughtless, beguiled the gentler hearts that beat beneath the embroidery, with a placid sensation of luxurious benevolence—as if by all that they wore in waywardness of beauty, comfort had first been given to the distressed, and aid to the indigent; it would be strange, I say, if, for a moment, the spirits of Truth and of Terror, which walk invisibly among the masques of the earth, would lift the dimness from our erring thoughts, and show us how—inasmuch as the sums exhausted for that magnificence would have given back the failing breath to many an unsheltered outcast on moor

and street—they who wear it have literally entered into partnership with Death; and dressed themselves in his spoils. Yes, if the veil could be lifted not only from your thoughts, but from your human sight, you would see—the angels do see—on those gay white dresses of yours, strange dark spots, and crimson patterns that you knew not of—spots of the inextinguishable red that all the seas cannot wash away; yes, and among the pleasant flowers that crown your fair heads, and glow on your wreathed hair, you would see that one weed was always twisted which no one thought of—the grass that grows on graves.

It was not, however, this last, this clearest and most appalling view of our subject, that I intended to ask you to take this evening; only it is impossible to set any part of the matter in its true light, until we go to the root of it. But the point which it is our special business to consider is, not whether costliness of dress is contrary to charity; but whether it is not contrary to mere worldly wisdom: whether, even supposing we knew that splendor of dress did not cost suffering or hunger, we might not put the splendor better in other things than dress. And, supposing our mode of dress were really graceful or beautiful, this might be a very doubtful question; for I believe true nobleness of dress to be an important means of education, as it certainly is a necessity to any nation which wishes to possess living art, concerned with portraiture of human nature. No good historical painting ever yet existed, or ever can exist, where the dresses of the people of the time are not beautiful: and had it not been for the lovely and fantastic dressing of the 13th to the 16th centuries, neither French, nor Florentine, nor Venetian art could have risen to anything like the rank it reached. Still, even then, the best dressing was never the costliest; and its effect depended much more on its beautiful, and, in early times, modest, arrangement, and on the

simple and lovely masses of its color, than on gorgeousness of clasp or embroidery. Whether we can ever return to any of those more perfect types of form is questionable; but there can be no question, that all the money we spend on the forms of dress at present worn, is, so far as any good purpose is concerned, wholly lost. Mind, in saying this, I reckon among good purposes the purpose which young ladies are said sometimes to entertain—of being married; but they would be married quite as soon (and probably to wiser and better husbands) by dressing quietly as by dressing brilliantly; and I believe it would only be needed to lay fairly and largely before them the real good which might be effected by the sums they spend in toilettes, to make them trust at once only to their bright eyes and braided hair for all the mischief they have a mind to. I wish we could, for once, get the statistics of a London season. There was much complaining talk in Parliament of the vast sum the nation has given for the best Paul Veronese in Venice—£14,000: I wonder what the nation meanwhile has given for its ball-dresses! Suppose we could see the London milliners' bills, simply for unnecessary breadths of slip and flounces, from April to July; I wonder whether £14,000 would cover *them*. But the breadths of slip and flounces are by this time as much lost and vanished as last year's snow; only they have done less good: but the Paul Veronese will last for centuries, if we take care of it; and yet we grumble at the price given for the painting, while no one grumbles at the price of pride.

Time does not permit me to go into any farther illustration of the various modes in which we build our statue out of snow, and waste our labor on things that vanish.

Things which are a mere luxury to one person are a means of intellectual occupation to another. Flowers in a London

ball-room are a luxury; in a botanical garden, a delight of the intellect; and in their native fields, both; while the most noble works of art are continually made material of vulgar luxury or of criminal pride; but, when rightly used, property of this class is the only kind which deserves the name of *real* property; it is the only kind which a man can truly be said to "possess." What a man eats, or drinks, or wears, so long as it is only what is needful for life, can no more be thought of as his possession than the air he breathes. The air is as needful to him as the food; but we do not talk of a man's wealth of air, and what food or clothing a man possesses more than he himself requires, must be for others to use (and, to him, therefore, not a real property in itself, but only a means of obtaining some real property in exchange for it). Whereas the things that give intellectual or emotional enjoyment may be accumulated and do not perish in using; but continually supply new pleasures and new powers of giving pleasures to others. And these, therefore, are the only things which can rightly be thought of as giving "wealth" or "well being." Food conduces only to "being," but these to "*well* being." And there is not any broader general distinction between lower and higher orders of men than rests on their possession of this real property. The human race may be properly divided by zoologists into "men who have gardens, libraries, or works of art; and who have none;" and the former class will include all noble persons, except only a few who make the world their garden or museum; while the people who have not, or, which is the same thing, do not care for gardens or libraries, but care for nothing but money or luxuries, will include none but ignoble persons: only it is necessary to understand that I mean by the term "garden" as much the Carthusian's plot of ground fifteen feet square between his monastery buttresses, as I do the grounds of Chatsworth or

Kew; and I mean by the term "art" as much the old sailor's print of the Arethusa bearing up to engage the Belle Poule, as I do Raphael's "Disputa," and even rather more; for when abundant, beautiful possessions of this kind are almost always associated with vulgar luxury, and become then anything but indicative of noble character in their possessors. The ideal of human life is a union of Spartan simplicity of manners with Athenian sensibility and imagination, but in actual results, we are continually mistaking ignorance for simplicity, and sensuality for refinement.

*In general, pride is at the bottom of all great mistakes.* All the other passions do occasional good, but wherever pride puts in *its* word, everything goes wrong, and what it might be desirable to do quietly and innocently, it is morally dangerous to do proudly.

To be content in utter darkness and ignorance is indeed unmanly, and therefore we think that to love light and seek knowledge must always be right. Yet wherever *pride* has any share in the work, even knowledge and light may be ill pursued. Knowledge is good, and light is good, yet man perished in seeking knowledge, and moths perished in seeking light; and if we, who are crushed before the moth, will not accept such mystery as is needful for us, we shall perish in like manner. But, accepted in humbleness, it instantly becomes an element of pleasure; and I think that every rightly constituted mind ought to rejoice, not so much in knowing anything clearly, as in feeling that there is infinitely more which it cannot know. None but proud or weak men would mourn over this, for we may always know more if we choose, by working on; but the pleasure is, I think, to humble people, in knowing that the journey is endless, the treasure inexhausti-

ble,—watching the cloud still march before them with its summitless pillar, and being sure that, to the end of time and to the length of eternity, the mysteries of its infinity will still open farther and farther, their dimness being the sign and necessary adjunct of their inexhaustibleness. I know there are an evil mystery and a deathful dimness,—the mystery of the great Babylon—the dimness of the sealed eye and soul; but do not let us confuse these with the glorious mystery of the things which the angels "desire to look into," or with the dimness which, even before the clear eye and open soul, still rests on sealed pages of the eternal volume.

The ardor and abstraction of the spiritual life are to be honored in themselves, though the one may be misguided and the other deceived; and the deserts of Osma, Assisi, and Monte Viso are still to be thanked for the zeal they gave, or guarded, whether we find it in St. Francis and St. Dominic, or in those whom God's hand hid from them in the clefts of the rocks.

We refine and explain ourselves into dim and distant suspicion of an inactive God, inhabiting inconceivable places, and fading into the multitudinous formalisms of the laws of Nature.

All errors of this kind—and in the present day we are in constant and grievous danger of falling into them—arise from the originally mistaken idea that man can, "by searching, find out God—find out the Almighty to perfection;" that is to say, by help of courses of reasoning and accumulations of science, apprehend the nature of the Deity in a more exalted and more accurate manner than in a state of comparative ignorance; whereas it is clearly necessary, from the beginning to the end of time, that God's way of revealing Himself to His creatures should be a *simple* way, which *all* those creatures may under-

stand. Whether taught or untaught, whether of mean capacity or enlarged, it is necessary that communion with their Creator should be possible to all; and the admission to such communion must be rested, not on their having a knowledge of astronomy, but on their having a human soul. In order to render this communion possible, the Deity has stooped from His throne, and has not only, in the person of the Son, taken upon Him the veil of our human *flesh*, but, in the person of the Father, taken upon Him the veil of our Human *thoughts*, and permitted us, by His own spoken authority, to conceive Him simply and clearly as a loving Father and Friend;—a being to be walked with and reasoned with; to be moved by our entreaties, angered by our rebellion, alienated by our coldness, pleased by our love, and glorified by our labor; and, finally, to be beheld in immediate and active presence in all the powers and changes of creation. This conception of God, which is the child's, is evidently the only one which can be universal, and therefore the only one which *for us* can be true. The moment that, in our pride of heart, we refuse to accept the condescension of the Almighty, and desire Him, instead of stooping to hold our hands, to rise up before us into His glory, —we hoping that by standing on a grain of dust or two of human knowledge higher than our fellows, we may behold the Creator as He rises,—God takes us at our word; He rises, into His own invisible and inconceivable majesty; He goes forth upon the ways which are not our ways, and retires into the thoughts which are not our thoughts; and we are left lone. And presently we say in our vain hearts, "There is no God."

It may be proved, with much certainty, that God intends no man to live in this world without working: but it seems to me no less evident that He intends every man to be happy in his

work. It is written, "in the sweat of thy brow," but it was never written, "in the breaking of thine heart," thou shalt eat bread: and I find that, as on the one hand, infinite misery is caused by idle people, who both fail in doing what was appointed for them to do, and set in motion various springs of mischief in matters in which they should have had no concern, so on the other hand, no small misery is caused by over-worked and unhappy people, in the dark views which they necessarily take up themselves, and force upon others, of work itself. Were it not so, I believe the fact of their being unhappy is in itself a violation of divine law, and a sign of some kind of folly or sin in their way of life. Now in order that people may be happy in their work, these three things are needed: They must be fit for it: They must not do too much of it: and they must have a sense of success in it—not a doubtful sense, such as needs some testimony of other people for its confirmation, but a sure sense, or rather knowledge, that so much work has been done well, and fruitfully done, whatever the world may say or think about it. So that in order that a man may be happy, it is necessary that he should not only be capable of his work, but a good judge of his work.

The first thing then that he has to do, if unhappily his parents or masters have not done it for him, is to find out what he is fit for. In which inquiry a man may be very safely guided by his likings, if he be not also guided by his pride. People usually reason in some such fashion as this: "I don't seem quite fit for a head-manager in the firm of ——— & Co., therefore, in all probability, I am fit to be Chancellor of the Exchequer." Whereas, they ought rather to reason thus: "I don't seem quite fit to be head-manager in the firm of ——— & Co., but I dare say I might do something in a small greengrocery business; I used to be a good judge of pease;" that is to say, always trying lower instead of trying higher, until they find bottom:

once well set on the ground, a man may build up by degrees safely, instead of disturbing every one in his neighborhood by perpetual catastrophes. But this kind of humility is rendered especially difficult in these days, by the contumely thrown on men in humble employments. The very removal of the massy bars which once separated one class of society from another, has rendered it tenfold more shameful in foolish people's, i. e. in most people's eyes, to remain in the lower grades of it, than ever it was before. When a man born of an artisan was looked upon as an entirely different species of animal from a man born of a noble, it made him no more uncomfortable or ashamed to remain that different species of animal, than it makes a horse ashamed to remain a horse, and not to become a giraffe. But now that a man may make money, and rise in the world, and associate himself, unreproached, with people once far above him, not only is the natural discontentedness of humanity developed to an unheard-of extent, whatever a man's position, but it becomes a veritable shame to him to remain in the state he was born in, and everybody thinks it his *duty* to try to be a "gentleman." Persons who have any influence in the management of public institutions for charitable education know how common this feeling has become. Hardly a day passes but they receive letters from mothers who want all their six or eight sons to go to college, and make the grand tour in the long vacation, and who think there is something wrong in the foundations of society, because this is not possible. Out of every ten letters of this kind, nine will allege, as the reason of the writers' importunity, their desire to keep their families in such and such a "station of life." There is no real desire for the safety, the discipline, or the moral good of the children, only a panic horror of the inexpressibly pitiable calamity of their living a ledge or two lower on the molehill of the world—a calamity to be averted at any cost whatever, of struggle, anxiety, and

shortening of life itself. I do not believe that any greater good could be achieved for the country, than the change in public feeling on this head, which might be brought about by a few benevolent men, undeniably in the class of "gentlemen," who would, on principle, enter into some of our commonest trades, and make them honorable; showing that it was possible for a man to retain his dignity, and remain, in the best sense, a gentleman, though part of his time was every day occupied in manual labor, or even in serving customers over a counter. I do not in the least see why courtesy, and gravity, and sympathy with the feelings of others, and courage, and truth, and piety, and what else goes to make up a gentleman's character, should not be found behind a counter as well as elsewhere, if they were demanded, or even hoped for, there.

Let us suppose, then, that the man's way of life and manner of work have been discreetly chosen; then the next thing to be required is, that he do not over-work himself therein. I am not going to say anything here about the various errors in our systems of society and commerce, which appear (I am not sure if they ever do more than appear) to force us to over-work ourselves merely that we may live; nor about the still more fruitful cause of unhealthy toil—the incapability, in many men, of being content with the little that is indeed necessary to their happiness. I have only a word or two to say about one special cause of over-work—the ambitious desire of doing great or clever things, and the hope of accomplishing them by immense efforts: hope as vain as it is pernicious; not only making men over-work themselves, but rendering all the work they do unwholesome to them. I say it is a vain hope, and let the reader be assured of this (it is a truth all-important to the best interests of humanity). *No great intellectual thing was ever done by great effort;* a great thing can only be done by a great man, and he does it *without* effort. Nothing is, at present,

less understood by us than this—nothing is more necessary to be understood. Let me try to say it as clearly, and explain it as fully as I may.

I have said no great *intellectual* thing: for I do not mean the assertion to extend to things moral. On the contrary, it seems to me that just because we are intended, as long as we live, to be in a state of intense moral effort, we are *not* intended to be in intense physical or intellectual effort. Our full energies are to be given to the soul's work—to the great fight with the Dragon—the taking the kingdom of heaven by force. But the body's work and head's work are to be done quietly, and comparatively without effort. Neither limbs nor brain are ever to be strained to their utmost; that is not the way in which the greatest quantity of work is to be got out of them: they are never to be worked furiously, but with tranquillity and constancy. We are to follow the plough from sunrise to sunset, but not to pull in race-boats at the twilight: we shall get no fruit of that kind of work, only disease of the heart.

How many pangs would be spared to thousands, if this great truth and law were but once sincerely, humbly understood,—that if a great thing can be done at all, it can be done easily; that, when it is needed to be done, there is perhaps only one man in the world who can do it; but *he* can do it without any trouble—without more trouble, that is, than it costs small people to do small things; nay, perhaps, with less. And yet what truth lies more openly on the surface of all human phenomena? Is not the evidence of Ease on the very front of all the greatest works in existence? Do they not say plainly to us, not, "there has been a great *effort* here," but, "there has been a great *power* here"? It is not the weariness of mortality, but the strength of divinity, which we have to recognise in all mighty things; and that is just what we now *never* recognise, but think that we are to do great things, by help of iron bars and perspiration

—alas! we shall do nothing that way but lose some pounds of our own weight.

Yet, let me not be misunderstood, nor this great truth be supposed anywise resolvable into the favorite dogma of young men, that they need not work if they have genius. The fact is that a man of genius is always far more ready to work than other people, and gets so much more good from the work that he does, and is often so little conscious of the inherent divinity in himself, that he is very apt to ascribe all his capacity to his work, and to tell those who ask how he came to be what he is: "If I *am* anything, which I much doubt, I made myself so merely by labor." This was Newton's way of talking, and I suppose it would be the general tone of men whose genius had been devoted to the physical sciences. Genius in the Arts must commonly be more self-conscious, but in whatever field, it will always be distinguished by its perpetual, steady, well directed, happy, and faithful labor in accumulating and disciplining its powers, as well as by its gigantic, incommunicable facility in exercising them. Therefore, literally, it is no man's business whether he has genius or not: work he must, whatever he is, but quietly and steadily; and the natural and unforced results of such work will be always the things that God meant him to do, and will be his best. No agonies nor heart-rendings will enable him to do any better. If he be a great man, they will be great things; if a small man, small things; but always, if thus peacefully done, good and right; always, if restlessly and ambitiously done, false, hollow, and despicable.

Then the third thing needed was, I said, that a man should be a good judge of his work; and this chiefly that he may not be dependent upon popular opinion for the manner of doing it, but also that he may have the just encouragement of the sense of progress, and an honest consciousness of victory: how else can he become

"That awful independent on to-morrow,
Whose yesterdays look backwards with a smile."

I am persuaded that the real nourishment and help of such a feeling as this is nearly unknown to half the workmen of the present day. For whatever appearance of self-complacency there may be in their outward bearing, it is visible enough, by their feverish jealousy of each other, how little confidence they have in the sterling value of their several doings. Conceit may puff a man up, but never prop him up; and there is too visible distress and hopelessness in men's aspects to admit of the supposition that they have any stable support of faith in themselves.

I have stated these principles generally, because there is no branch of labor to which they do not apply: But there is one in which our ignorance or forgetfulness of them has caused an incalculable amount of suffering: and I would endeavor now to reconsider them with especial reference to it,—the branch of the Arts.

In general, the men who are employed in the Arts have freely chosen their profession, and suppose themselves to have special faculty for it; yet, as a body, they are not happy men. For which this seems to me the reason, that they are expected, and themselves expect, to make their bread *by being clever*—not by steady or quiet work; and are, therefore, for the most part, trying to be clever, and so living in an utterly false state of mind and action.

This is the case, to the same extent, in no other profession or employment. A lawyer may indeed suspect that, unless he has more wit than those around him, he is not likely to advance in his profession; but he will not be always thinking how he is to display his wit. He will generally understand, early in his career, that wit must be left to take care of itself, and that it is hard knowledge of law and vigorous examination and collation

of the facts of every case entrusted to him, which his clients will mainly demand: this it is which he has to be paid for; and this is healthy and measurable labor, payable by the hour. If he happen to have keen natural perception and quick wit, these will come into play in their due time and place, but he will not think of them as his chief power; and if he have them not, he may still hope that industry and conscientiousness may enable him to rise in his profession without them. Again in the case of clergymen: that they are sorely tempted to display their eloquence or wit, none who know their own hearts will deny, but then they *know* this to *be* a temptation: they never would suppose that cleverness was all that was to be expected from them, or would sit down deliberately to write a clever sermon: even the dullest or vainest of them would throw some veil over their vanity, and pretend to some profitableness of purpose in what they did. They would not openly ask of their hearers —Did you think my sermon ingenious, or my language poetical? They would early understand that they were not paid for being ingenious, nor called to be so, but to preach truth; that if they happened to possess wit, eloquence, or originality, these would appear and be of service in due time, but were not to be continually sought after or exhibited: and if it should happen that they had them not, they might still be serviceable pastors without them.

Not so with the unhappy artist. No one expects any honest or useful work of him; but every one expects him to be ingenious. Originality, dexterity, invention, imagination, every thing is asked of him except what alone is to be had for asking—honesty and sound work, and the due discharge of his function as a painter. What function? asks the reader in some surprise. He may well ask; for I suppose few painters have any idea what their function is, or even that they have any at all.

And yet surely it is not so difficult to discover. The faculties, which when a man finds in himself, he resolves to be a painter, are, I suppose, intenseness of observation and facility of imitation. The man is created an observer and an imitator; and his function is to convey knowledge to his fellow-men, of such things as cannot be taught otherwise than ocularly. For a long time this function remained a religious one: it was to impress upon the popular mind the reality of the objects of faith, and the truth of the histories of Scripture, by giving visible form to both. That function has now passed away, and none has as yet taken its place. The painter has no profession, no purpose. He is an idler on the earth, chasing the shadows of his own fancies.

But he was never meant to be this.

I do not know anything more ludicrous among the self-deceptions of well-meaning people than their notion of patriotism, as requiring them to limit their efforts to the good of their own country;—the notion that charity is a geographical virtue, and that what it is holy and righteous to do for people on one bank of a river, it is quite improper and unnatural to do for people on the other. It will be a wonderful thing, some day or other, for the Christian world to remember, that it went on thinking for two thousand years that neighbors were neighbors at Jerusalem, but not at Jericho; a wonderful thing for us English to reflect, in after-years, how long it was before we could shake hands with anybody across the shallow salt wash, which the very chalk-dust of its two shores whitens from Folkstone to Ambleteuse.

It would be well if, instead of preaching continually about the doctrine of faith and good works, our clergymen would simply explain to their people a little what good works mean. There is not a chapter in all the book we profess to believe

more specially and directly written for England, than the second of Habakkuk, and I never in all my life heard one of its practical texts preached from. I suppose the clergymen are all afraid, and know that their flocks, while they will sit quite politely to hear syllogisms out of the epistle to the Romans, would get restive directly if they ever pressed a practical text home to them. But we should have no mercantile catastrophes, and no distressful pauperism, if we only read often, and took to heart, those plain words: "Yea, also, because he is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and cannot be satisfied,—Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, 'Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his: and to him that *ladeth himself with thick clay*.'" (What a glorious history, in one metaphor, of the life of a man greedy of fortune.) "Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness that he may set his nest on high. Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity. Behold, is it not of the Lord of Hosts that the people shall labor in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity."

"She riseth while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry, her clothing is silk and purple. Strength and honor are in her clothing, and she shall rejoice in time to come."

Now, you will observe that in this description of the perfect economist, or mistress of a household, there is a studied expression of the balanced division of her care between the two great objects of utility and splendor; in her right hand, food and flax, for life and clothing; in her left hand, the purple and the needle-work, for honor and for beauty. All per-

fect housewifery or national economy is known by these two divisions; wherever either is wanting, the economy is imperfect. If the motive of pomp prevails, and the care of the national economist is directed only to the accumulation of gold, and of pictures, and of silk and marble, you know at once that the time must soon come when all these treasures shall be scattered and blasted in national ruin. If, on the contrary, the element of utility prevails, and the nation disdains to occupy itself in any wise with the arts of beauty or delight, not only a certain quantity of its energy calculated for exercise in those arts alone must be entirely wasted, which is bad economy, but also the passions connected with the utilities of property become morbidly strong, and a mean lust of accumulation, merely for the sake of accumulation, or even of labor, merely for the sake of labor, will banish at least the serenity and the morality of life, as completely, and perhaps more ignobly, than even the lavishness of pride, and the lightness of pleasure. And similarly, and much more visibly, in private and household economy, you may judge always of its perfectness by its fair balance between the use and the pleasure of its possessions.

That modern science, with all its additions to the comforts of life, and to the fields of rational contemplation, has placed the existing races of mankind on a higher platform than preceded them, none can doubt for an instant; and I believe the position in which we find ourselves is somewhat analogous to that of thoughtful and laborious youth succeeding a restless and heedless infancy. Not long ago, it was said to me by one of the masters of modern sciences: "When men invented the locomotive, the child was learning to go; when they invented the telegraph, it was learning to speak." He looked forward to the manhood of mankind, as assuredly the nobler in proportion to the slowness of its development. What might not be

expected from the prime and middle strength of the order of existence whose infancy had lasted six thousand years? And, indeed, I think this the truest, as well as the most cheering, view that we can take of the world's history. Little progress has been made as yet. Base war, lying policy, thoughtless cruelty, senseless improvidence,—all things which, in nations, are analogous to the petulance, cunning, impatience, and carelessness of infancy,—have been, up to this hour, as characteristic of mankind as they were in the earliest periods; so that we must either be driven to doubt of human progress at all, or look upon it as in its very earliest stage. Whether the opportunity is to be permitted us to redeem the hours that we have lost; whether He in whose sight a thousand years are as one day, has appointed us to be tried by the continued possession of the strange powers with which he has lately endowed us; or whether the period of childhood and of probation are to cease together, and the youth of mankind is to be one which shall prevail over death, and bloom for ever in the midst of a new heaven and a new earth, are questions with which we have no concern. It is indeed right that we should look for, and hasten, so far as in us lies, the coming of the Day of God; but not that we should check any human efforts by anticipations of its approach. We shall hasten it best by endeavoring to work out the tasks that are appointed for us here; and, therefore, reasoning as if the world were to continue under its existing dispensation, and the powers which have just been granted to us were to be continued through myriads of future ages.

In the early ages of Christianity, there was little care taken to analyse character. One momentous question was heard over the whole world; "Dost thou believe in the Lord with all thine heart?" There was but one division among men,—

the great unatoneable division between the disciple and adversary. The love of Christ was all, and in all; and in proportion to the nearness of their memory of His person and teaching, men understood the infinity of the requirements of the moral law, and the manner in which it alone could be fulfilled. The early Christians felt that virtue, like sin, was a subtle universal thing, entering into every act and thought, appearing outwardly in ten thousand diverse ways, diverse according to the separate framework of every heart in which it dwelt; but one and the same always in its proceeding from the love of God, as sin is one and the same in proceeding from hatred of God. And in their pure, early, and practical piety they saw that there was no need for codes of morality, or systems of metaphysics. Their virtue comprehended everything, entered into everything; it was too vast and too spiritual to be defined; but there was no need of its definition. For through faith, working by love, they knew that all human excellence would be developed in due order; but that, without faith, neither reason could define, nor effort reach, the lowest phase of Christian virtue. And therefore, when any of the Apostles have occasion to describe or enumerate any forms of vice or virtue by name, there is no attempt at system in their words. They use them hurriedly and energetically, heaping the thoughts one upon another, in order as far as possible to fill the reader's mind with a sense of infinity both of crime and of righteousness. Hear St. Paul describe sin: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." There is evidently here an intense feeling of the universality of sin; and in order to express it,

the Apostle hurries his words confusedly together, little caring about their order, as knowing all the vices to be indissolubly connected one with another. It would be utterly vain to endeavor to arrange his expressions as if they had been intended for the ground of any system, or to give any philosophical definition of the vices. So also hear him speaking of virtue: "Rejoice in the Lord. Let your moderation be known unto all men. Be careful for nothing, but in everything let your requests be made known unto God; and whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Observe, he gives up all attempt at definition; be leaves the definition to every man's heart, though he writes so as to mark the overflowing fulness of his own vision of virtue. And so it is in all writings of the Apostles; their manner of exhortation, and the kind of conduct they press, vary according to the persons they address, and the feeling of the moment at which they write, and never show any attempt at logical precision. And, although the words of their Master are not thus irregularly uttered, but are weighed like fine gold, yet, even in His teaching, there is no detailed or organized system of morality; but the command only of that faith and love which were to embrace the whole being of man; "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Here and there an incidental warning against this or that more dangerous form of vice or error, "Take heed and beware of covetousness," "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees," here and there a plain example of the meaning of Christian love, as in the parables of the Samaritan and the Prodigal, and His own perpetual example: these were the elements of Christ's constant teachings; for the Beatitudes, which are the only approximation to anything like a

systematic statement, belong to different conditions and characters of individual men, not to abstract virtues. And all early Christians taught in the same manner. They never cared to expound the nature of this or that virtue; for they knew that the believer who had Christ, had all. Did he need fortitude? Christ was his rock: Equity? Christ was his righteousness: Holiness? Christ was his sanctification: Liberty? Christ was his redemption: Temperance? Christ was his ruler: Wisdom? Christ was his light: Fruitfulness? Christ was the truth: Charity? Christ was love.

Now, exactly in proportion as the Christian religion became less vital, and as the various corruptions which time and Satan brought into it were able to manifest themselves, the person and offices of Christ were less dwelt upon, and the virtues of Christians more. The Life of the Believer became in some degree separated from the Life of Christ; and his virtue, instead of being a stream flowing forth from the throne of God, and descending upon the earth, began to be regarded by him as a pyramid upon earth, which he had to build up, step by step, that from the top of it he might reach the Heavens.

I understand not the most dangerous, because most attractive form of modern infidelity, which, pretending to exalt the beneficence of the Deity, degrades it into a reckless infinitude of mercy, and blind obliteration of the work of sin; and which does this chiefly by dwelling on the manifold appearances of God's kindness on the face of creation. Such kindness is indeed everywhere and always visible; but not alone. Wrath and threatening are invariably mingled with the love; and in the utmost solitudes of nature, the existence of Hell seems to me as legibly declared by a thousand spiritual utterances, as that of Heaven. It is well for us to dwell with thankfulness

on the unfolding of the flower, and the falling of the dew, and the sleep of the green fields in the sunshine, but the blasted trunk, the barren rock, the moaning of the bleak winds, the roar of the black, perilous, merciless whirlpools of the mountain streams, the solemn solitudes of moors and seas, the continual fading of all beauty into darkness, and of all strength into dust, have these no language for us? We may seek to escape their teachings by reasonings touching the good which is wrought out of all evil; but it is vain sophistry. The good succeeds to the evil as day succeeds the night, but so also the evil to the good. Gerizim and Ebal, birth and death, light and darkness, heaven and hell, divide the existence of man, and his Futurity.

And because the thoughts of the choice we have to make between these two, ought to rule us continually, not so much in our own actions (for these should, for the most part, be governed by settled habit and principle) as in our manner of regarding the lives of other men, and our own responsibilities with respect to them; therefore, it seems to me that the healthiest state into which the human mind can be brought is that which is capable of the greatest love, and the greatest awe.

When the sermon is good we need not much concern ourselves about the form of the pulpit. But sermons cannot always be good; and I believe that the temper in which the congregation set themselves to listen may be in some degree modified by their perception of fitness or unfitness, impressiveness or vulgarity, in the disposition of the place appointed for the speaker,—not to the same degree, but somewhat in the same way, that they may be influenced by his own gestures or expression, irrespective of the sense of what he says. I believe therefore, in the first place, that pulpits ought never to be highly decorated; the speaker is apt to look mean or diminu

tive if the pulpit is either on a very large scale or covered with splendid ornament, and if the interest of the sermon should flag, the mind is instantly tempted to wander. I have observed that in almost all cathedrals, when the pulpits are peculiarly magnificent, sermons are not often preached from them; but rather, and especially if for any important purpose, from some temporary erection in other parts of the building: and though this may often be done because the architect has consulted the effect upon the eye more than the convenience of the ear in the placing of his larger pulpit, I think it also proceeds in some measure from a natural dislike in the preacher to match himself with the magnificence of the rostrum, lest the sermon should not be thought worthy of the place. Yet, this will rather hold of the colossal sculptures, and pyramids of fantastic tracery which encumber the pulpits of Flemish and German churches, than of the delicate mosaics and ivory-like carving of the Romanesque basilicas, for when the form is kept simple, *much* loveliness of color and costliness of work may be introduced, and yet the speaker not be thrown into the shade by them.

But, in the second place, whatever ornaments we admit ought clearly to be of a chaste, grave, and noble kind; and what furniture we employ, evidently more for the honoring of God's word than for the ease of the preacher. For there are two ways of regarding a sermon, either as a human composition, or a Divine message. If we look upon it entirely as the first, and require our clergymen to finish it with their utmost care and learning, for our better delight whether of ear or intellect, we shall necessarily be led to expect much formality and stateliness in its delivery, and to think that all is not well if the pulpit have not a golden fringe round it, and a goodly cushion in front of it, and if the sermon be not fairly written in a black book, to be smoothed upon the cushion in a majes-

tic manner before beginning; all this we shall duly come to expect: but we shall at the same time consider the treatise thus prepared as something to which it is our duty to listen without restlessness for half an hour or three quarters, but which, when that duty has been decorously performed, we may dismiss from our minds in happy confidence of being provided with another when next it shall be necessary. But if once we begin to regard the preacher, whatever his faults, as a man sent with a message to us, which it is a matter of life or death whether we hear or refuse; if we look upon him as set in charge over many spirits in danger of ruin, and having allowed to him but an hour or two in the seven days to speak to them; if we make some endeavor to conceive how precious these hours ought to be to him, a small vantage on the side of God after his flock have been exposed for six days together to the full weight of the world's temptation, and he has been forced to watch the thorn and the thistle springing in their hearts, and to see what wheat had been scattered there snatched from the wayside by this wild bird and the other, and at last, when breathless and weary with the week's labor they give him this interval of imperfect and languid hearing, he has but thirty minutes to get at the separate hearts of a thousand men, to convince them of all their weaknesses, to shame them for all their sins, to warn them of all their dangers, to try by this way and that to stir the hard fastenings of those doors where the Master himself has stood and knocked yet none opened, and to call at the openings of those dark streets where Wisdom herself hath stretched forth her hands and no man regarded,—thirty minutes to raise the dead in,—let us but once understand and feel this, and we shall look with changed eyes upon that frippery of gay furniture about the place from which the message of judgment must be delivered, which either breathes upon the dry bones that they may live, or, if ineffectual, remains

recorded in condemnation, perhaps against the utterer and listener alike, but assuredly against one of them. We shall not so easily bear with the silk and gold upon the seat of judgment, nor with ornament of oratory in the mouth of the messenger; we shall wish that his words may be simple, even when they are sweetest, and the place from which he speaks like a marble rock in the desert, about which the people have gathered in their thirst.

## MODERN EDUCATION.

By a large body of the people of England and of Europe a man is called educated if he can write Latin verses and construe a Greek chorus. By some few more enlightened persons it is confessed that the construction of hexameters is not in itself an important end of human existence; but they say, that the general discipline which a course of classical reading gives to the intellectual powers, is the final object of our scholastical institutions.

But it seems to me, there is no small error even in this last and more philosophical theory. I believe, that what it is most honorable to know, it is also most profitable to learn; and that the science which it is the highest power to possess, it is also the best exercise to acquire.

And if this be so, the question as to what should be the material of education, becomes singularly simplified. It might be matter of dispute what processes have the greatest effect in developing the intellect; but it can hardly be disputed what facts it is most advisable that a man entering into life should accurately know.

I believe, in brief, that he ought to know three things:

First. Where he is.

Secondly. Where he is going.

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Thirdly. What he had best do under those circumstances.

First. Where he is.—That is to say, what sort of a world he has got into; how large it is; what kind of creatures live in it, and how; what it is made of, and what may be made of it.

Secondly. Where he is going.—That is to say, what chances or reports there are of any other world besides this; what seems to be the nature of that other world; and whether, for information respecting it, he had better consult the Bible, Koran, or Council of Trent.

Thirdly. What he had best do under those circumstances. —That is to say, what kind of faculties he possesses; what are the present state and wants of mankind; what is his place in society; and what are the readiest means in his power of attaining happiness and diffusing it. The man who knows these things, and who has had his will so subdued in the learning them, that he is ready to do what he knows he ought, I should call educated; and the man who knows them not, uneducated, though he could talk all the tongues of Babel.

Our present European system of so-called education ignores, or despises, not one, nor the other, but all the three, of these great branches of human knowledge.

First: It despises Natural History.—Until within the last year or two, the instruction in the physical sciences given at Oxford consisted of a course of twelve or fourteen lectures on the Elements of Mechanics or Pneumatics, and permission to ride out to Shotover with the Professor of Geology. I do not know the specialities of the system pursued in the academies of the Continent; but their practical result is, that unless a man's natural instincts urge him to the pursuit of the physical sciences too strongly o be resisted, he enters into life utterly ignorant of them. I cannot, within my present limits,

even so much as count the various directions in which this ignorance does evil. But the main mischief of it is, that it leaves the greater number of men without the natural food which God intended for their intellects. For one man who is fitted for the study of words, fifty are fitted for the study of things, and were intended to have a perpetual, simple, and religious delight in watching the processes, or admiring the creatures, of the natural universe. Deprived of this source of pleasure, nothing is left to them but ambition or dissipation; and the vices of the upper classes of Europe are, I believe, chiefly to be attributed to this single cause.

Secondly: It despises Religion.—I do not say it despises "Theology," that is to say, *talk* about God. But it despises "Religion;" that is to say, the "binding" or training to God's service. There is much talk and much teaching in all our academies, of which the effect is not to bind, but to loosen, the elements of religious faith. Of the ten or twelve young men who, at Oxford, were my especial friends, who sat with me under the same lectures on Divinity, or were punished with me for missing lecture by being sent to evening prayers, four are now zealous Romanists, a large average out of twelve; and while thus our own universities profess to teach Protestantism, and do not, the universities on the Continent profess to teach Romanism, and do not,—sending forth only rebels and infidels. During long residence on the Continent, I do not remember meeting with above two or three young men, who either believed in revelation, or had the grace to hesitate in the assertion of their infidelity.

Whence, it seems to me, we may gather one of two things; either that there is nothing in any European form of religion so reasonable or ascertained, as that it can be taught securely to our youth, or fastened in their minds by any rivets of proof which they shall not be able to loosen the moment they begin

to think; or else, that no means are taken to train them in such demonstrable creeds.

It seems to me the duty of a rational nation to ascertain (and to be at some pains in the matter) which of these suppositions is true; and, if indeed no proof can be given of any supernatural fact, or Divine doctrine, stronger than a youth just out of his teens can overthrow in the first stirrings of serious thought, to confess this boldly; to get rid of the expense of an Establishment, and the hypocrisy of a Liturgy; to exhibit its cathedrals as curious memorials of a bygone superstition, and, abandoning all thoughts of the next world, to set itself to make the best it can of this.

But if, on the other hand, there does exist any evidence by which the probability of certain religious facts may be shown, as clearly, even, as the probabilities of things not absolutely ascertained in astronomical or geological science, let this evidence be set before all our youth so distinctly, and the facts for which it appears inculcated upon them so steadily, that although it may be possible for the evil conduct of after life to efface, or for its earnest and protracted meditation to modify, the impressions of early years, it may not be possible for our young men, the instant they emerge from their academies, to scatter themselves like a flock of wild fowl risen out of a marsh, and drift away on every irregular wind of heresy and apostasy.

Lastly. Our System of European education despises politics. —That is to say, the science of the relations and duties of men to each other. One would imagine, indeed, by a glance at the state of the world, that there was no such science. And, indeed, it is one still in its infancy.

It implies, in its full sense, the knowledge of the operations of the virtues and vices of men upon themselves and society; the understanding of the ranks and offices of their intellectual and bodily powers in their various adaptations to art, science,

and industry; the understanding of the proper offices of art, science, and labor themselves, as well as of the foundations of jurisprudence, and broad principles of commerce; all this being coupled with practical knowledge of the present state and wants of mankind.

What, it will be said, and is all this to be taught to schoolboys? No; but the first elements of it, all that are necessary to be known by an individual in order to his acting wisely in any station of life might be taught, not only to every schoolboy, but to every peasant. The impossibility of equality among men; the good which arises from their inequality; the compensating circumstances in different states and fortunes; the honorableness of every man who is worthily filling his appointed place in society, however humble; the proper relations of poor and rich, governor and governed; the nature of wealth, and mode of its circulation; the difference between productive and unproductive labor; the relation of the products of the mind and hand; the true value of works of the higher arts, and the possible amount of their production; the meaning of "Civilization," its advantages and dangers; the meaning of the term "Refinement;" the possibilities of possessing refinement in a low station, and of losing it in a high one; and, above all, the significance of almost every act of a man's daily life, in its ultimate operation upon himself and others;—all this might be, and ought to be, taught to every boy in the Kingdom, so completely, that it should be just as impossible to introduce an absurd or licentious doctrine among our adult population, as a new version of the multiplication table. Nor am I altogether without hope that some day it may enter into the heads of the tutors of our schools to try whether it is not as easy to make an Eton boy's mind as sensitive to falseness in policy, as his ear is at present to falseness in prosody.

I know that this is much to hope. That English ministers of religion should ever come to desire rather to make a youth acquainted with the powers of Nature and of God, than with the powers of Greek particles; that they should ever think it more useful to show him how the great universe rolls upon its course in heaven, than how the syllables are fitted in a tragic metre; that they should hold it more advisable for him to be fixed in the principles of religion than in those of syntax; or, finally, that they should ever come to apprehend that a youth likely to go straight out of college into parliament, might not unadvisably know as much of the Peninsular as of the Peloponnesian War, and be as well acquainted with the state of Modern Italy as of old Etruria;—all this, however unreasonably, I do hope, and mean to work for. For though I have not yet abandoned all expectation of a better world than this, I believe this in which we live is not so good as it might be. I know there are many people who suppose French revolutions, Italian insurrections, Caffre wars, and such other scenic efforts of modern policy, to be among the normal conditions of humanity. I know there are many who think the atmosphere of rapine, rebellion, and misery which wraps the lower orders of Europe more closely every day, is as natural a phenomenon as a hot summer. But God forbid! There are ills which flesh is heir to and troubles to which man is born; but the troubles which he is born to are as sparks which fly upward, not as flames burning to the nethermost Hell. The poor we must have with us always, and sorrow is inseparable from any hour of life; but we may make their poverty such as shall inherit the earth, and the sorrow, such as shall be hallowed by the hand of the Comforter, with everlasting comfort. We can, if we will but shake off this lethargy and dreaming that is upon us, and take the pains to think and act like men, we can, I say, make kingdoms to be like well governed households, in which, indeed,

while no care or kindness can prevent occasional heart-burnings, nor any foresight or piety anticipate all the vicissitudes of fortune, or avert every stroke of calamity, yet the unity of their affection and fellowship remains unbroken, and their distress is neither embittered by division, prolonged by imprudence, nor darkened by dishonor.

THE END.

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